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EDITED BY NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

**IN THE ELEMENTARY AND
THE SECONDARY SCHOOL**



THE
TEACHING OF ENGLISH
IN THE ELEMENTARY AND
THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

BY

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TO MY FIRST TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

My Mother and My Father

THROUGH WHOSE ENDEARING LIPS I LEARNED TO KNOW

THE SWEETNESS AND DIGNITY OF MY MOTHER-TONGUE

AND TO LOVE AND REVERE ITS NOBLEST UTTERANCE

IN THOSE FAMILIAR HOUSEHOLD VOLUMES

*The Bible, The Pilgrim's Progress, and The Book
of Common Prayer*

PREFACE

A PREFACE is justifiable only when it is indispensable. Here some explanation of the plan of this book becomes necessary for the guidance of those who may consult it for advice upon any special topic. They must not expect to find in any one chapter the author's views upon the teaching either of composition or of literature in any grade, or at any one point in the course; and for this reason,—that the treatment of each topic is progressive and cumulative. The book is a plea for unity and continuity in the English course from its beginnings in the kindergarten up through the high school. All the leading principles governing the study of English are, in the author's view, present in the earliest stages of English teaching, emerging into greater definiteness as the pupil advances in intellectual power and practical skill. Hence, the high school teacher, for example, will find that many of the basic principles to be followed in his work have been enunciated in the early chapters dealing with the kindergarten and primary grades, and are not set forth anew in the later chapters on the high school. On the other hand, a teacher in the beginning grades will find it assumed that her work in those grades, to be competently done, must be done in the light of the later phases of development treated in subsequent chapters.

This method of presentation is the consequence of

the writer's conviction that nothing is so much needed at the present time as the unification of English work from the earliest to the latest stages of progression. It should be controlled by unity of purpose and programme, and animated by unity of spirit. Each step should be taken with a clear knowledge both of the steps that have preceded and of those that are to follow it, and with a clear recognition of the all-important fact that the powers which are being trained are, at the beginning, the same powers that in their riper stages of growth are still being trained by the high school teacher and college professor. The child is busy from the beginning to the end, appreciatively, with the same great types of literature, and, expressively, with the same four kinds of writing,—narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative. What is essential to success is agreement as to the stages and methods by which the work is to be carried forward.

"Ah," said a practical grammar grade teacher, leaving a lecture by Professor Skyward on English Teaching, "if these learned professors would only descend to the level of practical talk, and instead of outlining Utopia to us, would suggest definite aims and definite ways of achieving them, time would not be wasted in listening to their lectures." The writer hopes he is not open to this reproach. He has aimed to be definite enough without being too prescriptive; to be practical without sacrificing suggestiveness. What is set down here is the outcome of his own efforts in the class room and in the work of supervision in the Ethical Culture School of New York. He may be permitted to say that his more audacious experiments were first put to

trial in the Manual Training High School of Brooklyn, and to record here his appreciation of the opportunities generously afforded him in that institution by the Principal, Mr. Charles D. Larkins. Since then, he has reaped the benefit of working in what is generally regarded as one of the experiment stations in education, — the Ethical Culture Schools founded by Dr. Felix Adler. Here, in fortunate association with Mr. J. F. Reigart and Mr. Frank A. Manny, successively its Superintendents, — not omitting Dr. Adler himself, who takes the keenest personal interest in the English work, — he has had a chance of getting into vital touch with a school that covers the whole field of elementary and secondary education. He owes much in opportunities and friendly aid to the school and its teachers, and would make especial acknowledgment of criticism and suggestions received from Mr. Manny, and, among the teachers, Miss Katharine C. Burnett, who have been kind enough to read the book throughout.

If a word may be added to intimate the point of view assumed in the writer's outlook upon his task, it may be this : he has conceived of the duty and the privilege of the teacher of English to be that of teaching it not only for its linguistic values, for the making of intelligent readers and capable writers and speakers ; but for its large culture values, and, above all, for its character values, — for the spiritual enlargement, clarification, and discipline of young hearts and minds and wills, which are to be touched to finer issues by its potent ministry.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

FROM one point of view the significance of the development of modern education can best be estimated by the progress of the mother-tongue toward the central place in formal instruction. When the study of the mother-tongue and its literature is made the core of the curriculum, education is something quite different from that training in which a foreign, perhaps an ancient, tongue holds the chief place. No people is intellectually independent until it has a language and a literature, all its own, worthy to be an educational instrument and an educational end. We English-speakers have been independent in the eyes of all the world at least since Chaucer's day, but our education has been sadly slow in catching up with our needs. The Latin tradition, French as the speech of the cultivated and the polite, and the dream of a universal language have all helped keep in the background the systematic study of English by those who use it. We have been told by one school of critics that the mother-tongue need not be taught, for it will be picked up somehow; by another, that it cannot be taught, for there is nothing to teach. Both fallacies have had their day, and we are now in the presence of a sane and healthy movement for the more careful and devoted study of the English language and

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

its literature. This movement has found its way into the elementary school, the secondary school, and the college. The present volume is, in a sense, an exposition and a criticism of it.

The first effect of this movement, if wholly successful, ought to be a new care for the purity and the precision of our speech and a new love for its literary masterpieces. Familiarity with them will not breed contempt, but rather respect and affection.

A chief obstacle to an early acquaintance with correct English and a use of it is the elaborate pains taken to approach it by a highly developed method. The matter is very largely one of imitation, and the child invariably uses the sort of English he is accustomed to hear, not the sort of English he is taught. He knows no distinction between the vernacular and literary English, and if he hears both he will use both indifferently. All the painstaking effort to raise him from the one plane to the other is time wasted. The one ruling maxim of English teaching ought to be: The child will speak and write the sort of English that he hears and reads.

The mother-tongue differs in one respect from all other subjects of study. It is not only an end, but the vehicle, of instruction. For this reason all teaching is English teaching, and every school exercise may be made, and should be made, an English lesson. English is a living language, not a dead one. Therefore it is that its modern masters vary it and add to it in ways that mark their genius. Pedantic English is not the same thing as correct English. School-taught English usually errs in the direction of pedantry; it lacks life and virility. The corrective is to be found by bringing

the child early and late into contact with literature that has character and distinction. Teach him to love this, to return to it often, and his own spoken and written English will be worthy.

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY,

October 4, 1902.

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY: THE MOVEMENT FOR THE REFORM OF ENGLISH STUDIES AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

THIS book is written toward the close of a stubborn agitation directed against the inefficiency of the English training given in our schools and colleges. The outcome of this agitation is that a new and revolutionizing importance attaches to the study of our English speech and its literature. To use that speech proficiently has now become the first requirement of our educational systems; to know and appreciate that literature, their chief test of culture. Hence it is that, for the first time in the history of education, the work of teaching English is being organized with something like scientific foresight and method. An unprecedented activity and enthusiasm in the pursuit of this aim are strikingly manifest. There is a bewildering output of educational textbooks, — Language Lessons, Readers, and Spellers; Grammars and Rhetorics; special school editions without end of the classics, old and new. Our educational journals are full of reports of new methods and experi-

ments. The literary interests of childhood are being studied and catered for, as they never have before, by our writers of prose and verse, by our psychologists and *compilers and adapters, and by the multiplying libraries* that are so rapidly establishing children's departments for the satisfaction and stimulation of young appetites.

This literary movement in education is the more remarkable because it is contemporaneous with a seemingly countervailing movement for the furtherance of scientific and practical education, to meet the more and more exacting demands of our expanding industrialism and commerce for high skill, intelligence, and scientific attainments. This dominating scientific and practical spirit of the age is expressing itself in the swift introduction of manual training, nature study, and commercial courses into our schools; in the rapid multiplication of our technical, professional, and business institutes; and in the elaborate equipment of laboratory and shop in the Grammar School, High School, and College. And yet this scientific and practical tendency has by no means thwarted the synchronous literary movement, with its demands upon our schools for much greater proficiency in the use of the English language and for a wider and more thorough literary culture. What is the significance of this?

Under one aspect it is itself an outcome of these very practical, utilitarian demands of the age. Of late it has become increasingly evident that the linguistic resources

of the average public schoolboy are conspicuously unequal to the needs of modern life — even of business life. The expressional power of the school or college graduate lags behind his knowledge and his thought power. Harvard College has declared that its Freshmen do not know how to use those tools of speech which, more than any others, are needed daily in college work. They can express themselves neither correctly nor effectively. So Harvard has taken heroic measures through its famed Freshman course in “daily themes” to repair the disability. Doubtless this illiteracy is due partly to the deterioration of our linguistic manners, the depression of linguistic standards, by the influence of foreign immigrants — a fact that explains why it is that this new strenuous movement for the improvement of our national tongue has its origin in America rather than in England or her colonies.

Other factors must, however, be taken into account in explaining the situation. Despite the fact that the main tide of our life flows in the channels of commerce and trade, and waters chiefly the fields of invention and science, the tributary streams of art and literature are large and fertilizing. The standard of culture is rising among us. The masses must be fed daily or weekly with a liberal meal of literary gossip. They buy new dollar books by the half-million; and expect a literary bargain counter in their mammoth stores. They erect libraries by the score. In fact, America feels the challenge of

Europe in the field of culture as in all other fields of activity; she is as ambitious (*e.g.* at the Paris Exposition) of artistic as of scientific laurels; of her educational as of her mechanical achievements. As a consequence of this ambitious rivalry, her culture at its best tends to assume a new and more original type. This is the main factor in the case: the rise of a new type of national culture. Our American literary culture owes less and less directly to antiquity, and is moving farther and farther away from the ideals of the Renaissance. More and more we draw from modern, and especially from ancestral British sources. There will no doubt be a new amalgam of this element, as the main constituent, with other elements and tendencies, German and (happily) Celtic, French, Norse, etc., which are powerfully represented in our population; but it is clear that the old native basis will remain.

✓ This literary movement in our schools means, we think, the conscious, systematic, and more liberal use of our English studies as the chief instrument of culture. A native culture, modern in spirit, and a new discipline, conscience, and pride in the use of our native tongue, are to become the touchstones of our intellectual life. We have a prophecy in the field of letters of this new American culture, in the bold American spirit of Emerson's¹ and Whitman's² work on

¹ The key-note is struck in the opening paragraph of his "Nature."

² His conviction to this effect is expressed in his "Democratic Vistas" and other prose pieces.

the one hand, and in Lowell's¹ more scholarly, academic work on the other. We have its exemplars in the broader fields of public life and personality in such types of simple, indigenous manhood as Lincoln and Grant.

We cannot develop this thesis here, important as it is in giving a proper orientation to the new English movement in our schools. We will only add this enlargement: that as we have in Emerson and Whitman a frank recognition that our life is too full of new resources and opportunities, new tasks and inspirations, and is too bare of reminders of a long, classic past for us to busy ourselves, as the European nations do, with historic background and survivals; so in Lowell (for that matter in Emerson too) we have a surviving pride of language, a pious recognition of the glory of our national speech, which will serve as the needed literary and scholarly element in our culture. Lowell, surely, was a sufficiently jealous American; yet it was true of him, as Mr. Henry James puts it, that "the thing he loved most in the world after his country was the English tongue, of which he was an infallible master, and his devotion to which was, in fact, a sort of agent in his patriotism." It is this linguistic form of patriotism — by which we rejoice that we

¹ Note especially expressions of his Americanism in some of the *Essays* in "My Study Windows" (*e.g.* On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners) and the "Commemoration Ode."

“speak the tongue

That Shakspeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held” —

that is to be the main spring of scholarly conscience in our literary culture, — a culture that need not be less fine, and may be much more vital, because it is nourished upon Shakespeare and Milton; upon the Bible and the “Pilgrim’s Progress”; upon Addison and Irving, Burke and Webster, Scott and Hawthorne, Tennyson and Longfellow, Browning and Emerson, Whitman and Thoreau much more than upon the masters of antiquity, although these masters are gaining a wider currency by means of masterly translations, of which the latest example is Norton’s noble version of Dante.

Here is the splendid animating and elevating impulse that may well be the conscious inspiration of this new humanistic movement in American education. Our teachers of English are called upon to use our unsurpassed English literature, as it has never been used before, toward the formation of character, the enrichment of life, and the refinement of manners. Let them see to it that our boys and girls, while they may know less than the educated few of earlier centuries knew of Homer and Demosthenes, Virgil and Cicero (we believe they will know more in large ways through translation), learn to draw very much more succulence than the classically trained youth drew from the great literary fruitage of the English masters; and at length

learn to honor and to gain the strength which so few of us now draw from Chaucer and Spenser, Burton and Hooker, Marlowe and Jonson, Browne and Bacon, and other great minds who have so much to give us in our own tongue.

It is with such general convictions and from such a point of view that we approach our task of attempting to focus some of the light that has been shed upon the new tasks and problems of the teacher of English by the discussions, the complaints and arraignments, the experiments and reforms, which have stirred the educational world during the past decade or so. That scattered light has not yet settled to a steady glow by any means; we must not expect that it will just yet. We shall remain for some time in the experimental stage of the New Learning. At present most of us are at work in a mist of unsettled questions which is very slowly lifting. Nevertheless, it may serve at such a time to make a tentative effort to formulate some general conclusions. These at least may serve the useful purpose of being starting-points of debate for further advance.

CHAPTER II

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE SCHOOL IN DEALING WITH ILLITERACY

So much attention has been drawn by wide discussion in the press to the battle against illiteracy, which the movement for the reform of English studies signalizes, that we think it necessary to consider carefully what the responsibilities of the school are in the matter of illiteracy. This will enable us to indicate our general conception of the scope and aims of English study, and to review the limitations that thwart and excuse the school. It is as important for the teacher as for the public to recognize these limitations at the outset.

In no subject do the forces of the social environment against which the school has to strive make themselves so continually felt as they do in English. In literary studies the higher ideals and sentiments of the race expressed by its poets and seers clash with the average commercialized ambitions and soiled ideals in whose atmosphere the child is reared; while in language work the higher usages of literary English exacted in the school are in perpetual conflict with the barbarisms

of the swarming illiterate outside. The teacher of English, at least in the great majority of our city public schools, is involved in unceasing warfare with these retarding forces. In Arithmetic or Science or Geography the teacher may sow on virgin soil; the English teacher must sow on soil choked with the weeds of bad habit, and must ceaselessly ply the hoe against untiring enemies.

In the discussion of the problem of illiteracy not enough allowance is made for this fact. It is one of fundamental importance; and our discussion must start with it because it has very practical bearings. The schools are held responsible by the public and by the colleges for linguistic faults that have their roots and their favoring soil in the illiteracy of the community. The standards of the community are more potent than those of the school; and against the illiteracy of the playground, the street, and the home, the literacy of the schoolroom has a weak chance. Undoubtedly the school may do more than it is doing — by heroic effort it may do much more — to beat back the tide of slovenly, slangy, numbled speech that is poured out on street and mart. But first of all let the difficulties that face the school be known and appreciated. Let it not bear the full burden of blame.

The discouraging fact that meets the teacher is that, although she may secure passably good speech, written and oral, in the class room, there is during recess and

on the playground and the street a barbaric reversion, with a sense of a relief, to the patois of "real life." It is this provoking Jekyll and Hyde dualism, this double standard of linguistic manners, with which we have to reckon. Too often the boy or girl will sin in society against his school conscience because to speak fair—to say "isn't" instead of "ain't," "coffee" instead of "cawfee"—is to put on airs in the eyes of their companions. No teacher will credit herself with full success unless she has overcome this dualism. She will measure her efforts, not merely by results obtained in the schoolroom, but by those which tell in the world outside it. Nevertheless, this wider success is more than can reasonably be expected of her; and our plea is for a recognition of her difficult task.

The fundamental fact to be borne in mind in this connection is that good speech is a habit, a point of social manners. It is, we urge, too much to expect that the habits enforced for a few hours daily in the schoolroom (Saturdays and Sundays and holidays and long vacations excepted) shall prevail against contrary influences affecting the child during the greater part of his daily life. Why is it that the average English or German or French child speaks and writes his native tongue more correctly and pleasantly than the average American child? The principal (though not the only) reason is to be found, not in the better and more laborious teaching of the schools, but in the higher

standard of social manners. We lack linguistic conscience and linguistic pride in this country. We do not attach to illiteracy the stigma that attaches to it abroad — a stigma that money, dress, ostentation, cannot atone for. Until with us also to be a gentleman is, as a first essential, to use gentle speech, we shall not cure, we shall but cauterize, illiteracy. Hence, it is that, viewed in its large aspects, the problem of illiteracy is not so much a school problem as a problem of American civilization.

The teacher who takes this wider social view of the situation feels ever called upon to reckon with those adverse social forces which discount her efforts; she becomes indeed a missionary of that higher civilization, one of whose requisites and instrumentalities is good speaking manners. We would make no fetish of fine manners — not even of correct grammar and spelling. We would not rank illiteracy with the seven deadly sins. We know that culture is not synonymous with character, nor refinement with virtue. And yet we are convinced that the work of promoting good speaking and writing, and the vital appreciation of great literature, may be made, and ought aimfully to be made, work for character, for virtue, for social perfection. It is so made when it becomes a discipline in that scrupulousness which strives for fine accuracy and unflawed truthfulness in the expression of thought and fact, and for a noble, restrained, and kindly command

of all the stops of feeling. It is so when it becomes a schooling in that considerateness which would spare in conversation the puzzled "What?" that greets indistinct and negligent utterance. It is so when it fosters the humane desire to enliven, dignify, and enrich social intercourse by the stimulating give and take of the riches of personal life and thought, or when it ennobles, by either appreciation or performance, the arts of the teacher and orator, the preacher or publicist.

The practical outcome of such a recognition of the interdependence of the school and the social environment of the child as we have pressed for, will be the endeavor of the school and of the teacher to counteract in all becoming ways the home influences that are thwarting the child's development and training in language, and to enlist the parents' sympathetic support of the efforts made by the school. We know that in many cases this may be done. We know that in a general way the school has often been indirectly a great civilizer of the home; that irregularity, disorder, uncleanness, and other bad habits have disappeared. May not the school hopefully voice a new demand for circumspection in habits of speech? Various schemes have been tried, with more or less success, to secure a larger and more effective coöperation between the two institutions: the parents' meeting, the parents' visiting day or consultation hours, the mothers' meeting in connection with the Kindergar-

ten and Primary Grades, the periodical report, the use of the school physician as an unobjectionable connecting link; and, with distinct reference to the English work, the card informing the parent of those bad habits of speech against which the efforts of the teacher are for the time being directed. Whatever the means employed, the first essential is to bring home to parents a sense of their responsibilities and opportunities as educators, and to convince them that the supreme influence in forming character and habit, and especially habits of speech, is the home and the social life of the child. The school, they must see, is the annex of the home, and not the other way about.

It would be aside from the definite purpose of this book to dilate upon the great wrong that is done to the child, and the priceless opportunity that is lost, when parents mistakenly discharge their responsibilities for the "education" of their children upon the free public institution that is supposed to have education exclusively in its charge. But stress may properly be put upon the unique opportunities which the home has for the cultivation of the child's linguistic powers and literary tastes. It is in the genial atmosphere of the home that the child may be the free, spontaneous little artist in words that he finds it difficult to be in school, under the taskmaster's eye. It is there, in the garrulous family circle, that the sympathies and sensibilities, the wit and imagination,

which are the keys to literature, the soul and savor of good talking and writing, are best nursed and quickened. It is there that a large and generous attitude toward life and literature may be established, and that a healthy *tone* of heart and mind, a temper at once fine and robust, may best be given. It is through the child's voluntary, eager home reading, through the family story-circle and reading-circle round the hearth, that he draws the nourishment that is strengthening because it is seasoned with pleasure. Not only Ruskin, but many a person whose solace and inspiration are in books, looks back to the source of his literary pleasures and powers to the home reading of the Bible or "Pilgrim's Progress" or the Church Collects and Prayers — books which have done more to preserve the dignity and saliency of common speech among the people than any Grammar or Reader or Text-book can do. The teacher who seeks the causes of this or that pupil's apt power of expression, or lively interest in story or poem, will generally find it in the home where the conversation around the table is wholesome and breezy; where the graphic word is appreciated, the hackneyed or slipshod one is frowned upon; where confused and inaccurate speech is driven to its lair in confused and slovenly thinking and observation; where the practice of reciting the favorite poem is encouraged; where the library tempts and waylays.

The teacher who has the large missionary spirit of which we have spoken will use tactfully any chance she may get to promote these home aids, if only because they further in such powerful fashion the ends for which she is striving in the schoolroom. Nor need such efforts imply — and this caution it may be desirable to make — that she is working for the rule of literary purism and priggishness, for the early tyranny of the dictionary, for the sort of linguistic nagging that goes on in some “correct” homes. No; what she is working for is wholesome, hearty, and more expressive human intercourse in the household — intercourse that, while not bookish, draws upon books and the personages who live in books for its felicitous enrichment. The poverty of family intercourse is due partly to our impoverished exchequer of words, partly to our slender resources of allusion. Most of us, as Stevenson has suggested in insisting upon the importance of *l’art de bien dire*, go unexpressed; our best thoughts and feelings never get into currency for lack of the bullion of words out of which they must be minted. Life in its sources is abundantly rich and flowing; but it easily stagnates in the material pools of gossip and the newspaper rubbish heap. This need not be while there is the rich, vicarious life of books to share in — books that while they are, as our beloved craftsman Stevenson says, “a mighty poor substitute for life,” are yet indispensable as opening up to us fields of common experi-

ence, common circles of friends and acquaintances. One of the happy privileges of parenthood, if only parents would realize it, is to reinhabit with their children the literary world of childhood: to follow with them once more Alice's tracks through Wonderland, and the world behind the Looking Glass; to set sail with Jason, and coast with Ulysses; to strive with fleet Atalanta; to quail before the genii with Aladdin; to soar on the roc's back with Sinbad; to fare forth on heroic errand with brave Jack or peerless King Arthur. These imaginative presences exert their greatest influence, not in the discounting formality of the schoolroom reading or discussion, but in the home circle. Cut them out of the real life of the home, and they will seldom gain fulness of being in the schoolroom; and without them as household presences, the real world can never be for the child the rich world of wonder, surprise, and sweet mystery, the world of heroic possibility and beckoning romance, that it might have been.

We have dwelt at the outset upon the importance of recognizing—by the parent and public, as well as by the teacher—the necessity of an intimate relation between the school and the home in achieving the best results in English training; and have indicated the kind of influences which the home may exert, because we are convinced that here is the beginning of wisdom. Like all good things, good manners, and especially good speaking manners, begin at home.

CHAPTER III

SOME FIRST PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION IN THEIR LITERARY APPLICATION

"Now, you know," says Socrates, when discussing the problem of education with Adeimantus in the "Republic," "now you know that in every enterprise the beginning is the main thing, especially in dealing with a young and tender nature. For at that time it is most plastic, and into it the stamp which it is desired to impress sinks deepest." This principle is gaining way among us; but we do not apply it vigorously in attempting to reform our English studies. Under the pressure of the College, reform in this instance is being wrought out slowly from the top downward, which is not the true method. The point of attack in the recent war upon illiteracy has been the High School; but we are beginning to see that it is absurd to place the emphasis there. Much more vital, as making or marring the child's literary tastes and aptitudes, are the sensitive years spent in the Primary and Grammar Grades. In time, perhaps, heeding at last old Mulcaster's advice, we shall select our most gifted teachers for this early work.

The tendency to give effect alike to Plato's view and Mulcaster's counsel, has received its main impetus from the Kindergarten. But the Kindergarten has not affected the linguistic and literary interests with which we are now concerned so much as those of handicraft and nature study. Rather has it, with its insistence upon "things before words" and its banishment of reading and writing, confronted the old "literary" type of education with a new motor type of learning through doing—through play, the gifts, and the occupations. True, it has made much of story-telling and of songs, but mainly from the ethical point of view, and sometimes with a woful neglect of literary considerations—a neglect that in turn has discounted ethical values. However, this indifference is not a consequence of the theories of Froebel, although his literary and artistic insensitiveness may have had something to answer for. These theories support the contention which we shall try to make good, that the linguistic and literary education of the child begins in infancy, and is well under way before the child reaches the Kindergarten. The office of the Kindergarten is to take stock of the child's varied powers and acquisitions, and to continue wisely the development of them. It is readily admitted by the Froebelians that among these powers and acquisitions none is more important and significant, and none will more powerfully control the child's destiny, than that

of speech. Seeing, then, that systematic English training and literary culture, the methodical education of ear and tongue, has its beginnings in the Kindergarten, we must start out by considering, from the specialist's point of view, what these first steps should be: how they stand related both to the pre-scholastic education received through the mother and the home, and to the subsequent stages of the Primary, Grammar, and High Schools.

Our basic conception, be it remembered, is that the process of learning to use one's mother-tongue to good effect in speaking and writing it, and to appreciate and catch inspiration from its master-products, ought to be regarded as a single organic process, each stage of which must be seen in relation to those that precede and follow. The Kindergarten teacher, therefore, must take account of the considerable progress already made by the child of four or five in its "mother-tongue," must know the extent and kind of its accomplishments, must understand the ways in which it has come by them, and so continue with greater skill and economy the methods by which these remarkable results have been achieved. This survey of the years preceding the Kindergarten has not been neglected in Kindergarten training; but the forward look into what is to come after assuredly has,—in fact, this neglect, we venture to interpolate, has been the bane of modern child-study generally. The work

of the beginning, to be done well, must be done in the light of the end, and of the stages of advance toward it; must be controlled, not merely by a knowledge of what the child has become, but of what we want to make of it, and how we intend to proceed with our business. We will note briefly, therefore, the few facts we need as a foreground for our sketch of the work to be done in the Kindergarten and the first stages of the Primary Grades.

We recall at this point a professor of literature who professes, among other things, to be able to discriminate by certain delicate superiorities those students of his who have been brought up on Mother Goose from those who have not. At least he is pedagogically plausible. If literary education, as part of the "encyclopædic" education of childhood which Comenius outlined, begins with infancy, then its first agencies are the cradle-song and the Mother Goose melody; and we must believe, in the spirit of our clever professor's remark, that it will make a difference whether or no the infant ear has been attuned to the rhythms and rhymes of these ditties, and the groping infant imagination filled with the dim figures of their heroes and rogues. The darky "mammy" who croons her delightfully quaint "Hush-a-by, baby, by," the Indian mother or the white mother who chants her "Hush-a-by, baby, on the tree-top," any mother who either lulls her babe with the beautiful "Sleep, baby, sleep,"

or stirs it with the "Ride a cock-horse" or "Ride, ride to Boston," — the mother who calls these classics to her aid, is laying the first foundations of literary appreciation, and is developing a sense for the simple rhythmic movements and the word-music of these baby lyrics, which will remain as undertones for a lifetime. And as poetry preceded prose in the literary history of the race, so too has the mother instinctively tended, Orpheus-like, to woo her child to activity, to sport, and to play, by means of verse and music, — in the "This little piggy went to market," "This is the church, and this the steeple," and, perhaps, if she is a modern Froebelian mother, some (not all, we hope) of the mother-play songs of the master. And this is the basic type of all true literary education — the education of the ear by "concourse of sweet sounds," the only acceptable cult of the Muses. Alas! that an education so auspiciously begun, rooted in folk-lore so simple and sound, should not be as effectively continued, but should degenerate among the people to the gutter-lyric, the music-hall trifle, or the mawkish drawing-room ballad.

As the child grows, to this simplest lyrical verse will be added a weightier balladry, stories in prose, and the singing games and pantomime plays of which a good and accessible supply now exists for the mother. The child becomes an active participant — minstrel, mimic, reciter, improviser — with the mother. He is, by imi-

tation, becoming proficient in that dear "mother tongue"; he has been brought up on excellent literary models (and let us hope the good gift of a sweet-voiced mother); and these are stimulating him to rhyme and invent for himself. He may show some faults, doubtless; bad habits caught from the nurse (that untutored nurse whose influence has been bewailed from the time of Quintilian) or from barbarian playmates on the street. "Never mind," we would say to the shamed parent [for we, too, have been put to the blush]. These things are not serious; better the hearty street life with them than the cloistered, padded life of the home without them. Good home influences, if the child has enough of them, will triumph; and the child, aided by the school, will slough off linguistic ailments as he lives down other nursery maladies.

Such then, very roughly, is the literary outfit of the toddling scholar received into the Kindergarten: by no means a bad equipment. He has already begun to enter upon his literary inheritance, the rich legacy of the centuries; for he has a good stock of classic rhymes and songs, and stories and plays, which are leading factors in the formation of good habits of speech. This must not be overlooked.

Dr. William T. Harris has said that, "On entrance into school, at the age of six or seven years, the child knows only the words and forms of the colloquial vocabulary." We venture, in the support of our theorem of unity

and continuity, to contradict this. Not only is he familiarized with rhyme and rhythm, but with the conventions of literary diction. Does he not sing, "Curly locks, Curly locks, *wilt thou* be mine?" "The North wind *doth* blow," "*Mistress* Mary, quite *contrary*," of the man in his town who was "*wondrous* wise"? His rhymes are replete with "quoth," "whither," "pray tell me," etc.; and in "Mother Hubbard" and "Who killed Cock Robin" and other rhymes, he uses such antique or poetic diction as "joiner's," "hosier's," "showl," "shroud," "pall," etc. No; his school training does not mark any new or sudden beginning of literary culture. He is already a promising literary pupil. What provision shall we make for his more systematic school training?

We may at once disarm apprehension by saying that we are not going to propose that the Kindergarten shall undertake new literary labors; it has ambitions enough and to spare. The burden of our advice is that its work in linguistics shall be better and more circumspectly done. We shall begin by noting its shortcomings. Then, taking our cue from these, we shall state, in rather general terms, some fundamental principles by which all early work should be guided. Then we shall make some practical suggestions as to the details of work.

The Kindergarten has not, we have said, taken much account of the child as a linguistic and literary

personage; and this in spite of the fact that the large training schools have expected and encouraged a liberal literary culture. In some respects this indifference has been salutary; it has paved the way to a broader conception of humane education. It has helped, for example, to kill the old superstitious regard for the three R's, propped as it was by the fallacy that education begins with learning to read and write. It has convinced us that the young child has at first much more important matters than these to attend to; and, moreover, that it is not dependent upon these (any more than were those "illiterates," the early Greeks, let us say) for the attainment even of a high kind of literary culture. It is the ear and not the, script or print that is the first, as it is the final, arbiter and nurse of all lovely speech and song. On the other hand, despite these important theoretical affirmations, its actual practice, so far as it has involved linguistic training, has been (we are bound to say) singularly defective. Its standards in poetry, language, and music—the three cannot well be considered apart—have not been high, scarcely higher than the depressed standards of the Elementary Grades. It has fed its little people upon doggerel for poetry, and upon mere tum-tumminess for music. This has been of a piece with the distressing color-schemes that used to glare at one from its walls, and the irritating, unattractive, and quite unsuitable

pictures of the mother-songs. Especially was the poetry sad, dyspeptic word-stuff, as unfit for the town-child by its subject-matter of rural themes of which he knew nothing, as it was unattractive and innutritious by reason of its lack of poetic quality. Fortunately the weakening dietary has been improved of late; and a distinct, if halting, advance is registered by Miss Blow's new collection of mother-songs. The stories have been less objectionable, and much adventurous mining in the old mythologies and folklore has been done. Still, too little attention has been paid to the form of the stories, to the devices of suspense, surprise, climax, and contrast; and description has been overworked.

Then, as evidence of the absence of true canons of literary judgment, some of the old stories have become much emaciated and crippled by the mistaken extermination of all those challenging, terrifying villains and cutthroats, giants and ogres, dragons and witches, against whom some of us used in nursery days to try to screw up a Herculean courage to match that of brave Jack o' the Beanstalk, St. George, and other valiant deliverers. Or the shadows of tragedy and pathos have been dispelled, and a world of vulgar high lights substituted: Red Riding Hood has been surgically rescued from the wolf's stomach, the Children in the Wood have been saved and respectably married, and, in short, ethical and

artistic violence done to much legend and myth that has embodied the higher instinctive wisdom of the race. To such an inane, gingerbread world has the child who knows cut fingers and stubbed toes, the fire and tempest of his own and grown-up people's experience, been introduced. Because he quails before the darkness, we turn on the lights and always keep them burning.

We would not let loose our critical instincts too savagely (although the self-satisfied aplomb one sometimes meets in high places provokes plainness), but we cannot pass by the linguistic insufficiencies that too frequently mar the work of the Kindergarten teacher. The exactions have been too light. Good grammar has been expected, but not always obtained; ease in story-telling, but not constructive skill; pleasant address, but not always musical intonation, clear enunciation, refined pronunciation. How often one hears story-telling that is clumsy in the choice of words, labored in style, bungling in structure, and disagreeable or inexpressive in vocal effects.

Taking our departure from these general criticisms, we will proceed to develop some of the principles that should govern right practice in these and other matters. These principles apply, not alone in the Kindergarten, but throughout the English course. It stands to reason that, if we believe in the unity and continuity of English work, we shall proceed from

the outset to observe certain counsels of perfection that must be continuously observed in every grade. Our purpose is to state these, as they come into view, for general guidance of the teachers of all grades, and to develop them at those junctures where they have their greatest significance.

The first point, the one to which we have been led by our consideration of the Kindergarten, is the importance of feeding the child upon the very best of digestive literary food—the very best of its kind, we mean, and the very best measured by true literary standards. A weighty reason for insisting upon this requirement here is that it is especially difficult to discern excellence in the simpler forms of art. To be simple without being bald is the crowning achievement of art. And that it is a rare attainment to distinguish between real poetry and pretty rhyme, between the song and the jingle, is proved by our collections of poems, songs, and stories for little folks. These are packed with verses and stories that have no artistic merit,—which amounts almost to saying that they have no other kind of merit, certainly no other compensating merit,—for good intention can hardly be regarded as such.

We would urge this point with some warmth. It is not a super-refinement. It must be the prime article of pedagogic faith, in the first as in the last teacher of English, that there is a great, an incalcu-

lably great, difference in the formative power of good and of poor poetry; a difference that is akin to that between a vulgar or coarse nature and a noble or fine one. Let us recall the feelings and convictions of the Greeks in this matter. Plato shall speak—from the “Republic” again—through the mouth of Socrates: “Is it, then, Glaucon, on these accounts that we attach such supreme importance to a musical education [music = poetry, as well as song], because rhythm and harmony sink most deeply into the recesses of the soul, and take most powerful hold of it, bringing gracefulness in their train, and making a man graceful if he be rightly nurtured, but if not, the reverse?” (The whole passage should be read: See p. 97 in the Golden Treasury translation.) The basis of this conviction is that “good style” in a composition, that is, good rhythm and harmony, is the fruit of a good nature in the composer: “good language, then, and good harmony and grace and good rhythm all depend upon a good nature, by which I do not mean that silliness which by courtesy we call good-nature, but a mind that is really well and nobly constituted in its moral character.”

We shall do full justice to these pregnant sentiments of Plato only if we carry to our English work his initial conception of education as nourishment, feeding, — a conception that is especially applicable to the young child, who lives so largely by imitation,

who so obviously becomes subdued to what he feeds upon. Instruction in English—as it consists so largely in the communication of those musical and imaginative products which lodge more memorably and fatally in the heart and mind of the child than anything else, and determine his life-long habits of seeing and feeling—must be conceived of as a feeding process: it must feed into vigorous life the child's powers of “admiration, hope, and love,” to quote Wordsworth's quite Platonic way of putting the matter; those powers of higher admiration, sympathy, sensibility, love, and reverence which, more than his power of thought and knowledge, control his being. We must tempt the eager and indiscriminating appetite of the child only by such pure food as will be readily assimilated by the healthier demands of his nature. Like the climbing plants of the wayside which grasp, now at a weak grass blade, now at a sturdy sapling, the child, too, will snatch at what comes first to hand, indeed seems to prefer the indigestible and gaudy confection to the wholesome diet. Nowhere are the dangers connected with the inadequate conception of education as a “drawing-out” so likely to show themselves as in English work. This conception has in its day done valiant service, as against the earlier conception of education as stuffing-in. But, in relation at least to the humanities, we have overdone the virtue. Some of the things put into

the soil of childhood are not to be drawn out at all; they must blossom of themselves. Others are to be drawn out slowly and cautiously; they must be allowed time and quiet, sun and rain, to grow. We are continually disturbing the seeds we sow; continually fingering the first tender shoots that spring from them, instead of nursing them into strong and expansive growth in the roots below as in the stems above ground. What we need so much now is a new faith in the slow harvest that will follow the leisurely, quiet, unconscious absorption of all the virtues that are in good literary food. Our later psychology teaches us, as Plato taught so long ago, that the greater results of our education are immeasurable. We must see to it first of all that we feed aright that great subconscious self of instinctive tastes, of swaying loves and hates, desires and aspirations, which is the central self in man.

To this insistence upon the need, first, of selecting the best food for the spiritual sustenance of the child, and, secondly, of not unwisely interfering with the slow digestive processes whereby this food becomes assimilated and converted into power, we may add a caution not to stint its supply. Overfeeding is just as bad as underfeeding; but it has not been our fault under the "drawing-out" *régime*. Our diet has been too lean; we have starved by monotonous reiteration, and have tried to get out of the

child and of the spare meals we have allowed him, the very last ounce of result they have had it in them to yield. But of this we shall have more to say later.

Now, we shall be less prone to exhaust the child by this effort to "draw him out," and get him to overhaul and dissect and play the showman to his possessions, if we bear in mind more constantly the nature of the assimilative process; so that we may assist rather than retard it. The prehensile power of the child is not so much rational and analytic, as imaginative and imitative. The way to get him to appropriate a fact or idea is not to labor with him until he knows that he knows, but to insure some sort of unconscious imitative reaction. He must unconsciously *do* something about it. Froebel brought into convincing clearness the fact that the process of assimilation is by no means a passive or receptive process. Self-activity in some form or other is the means whereby the child affirms his possession of new knowledge and idea. He learns by doing, said Froebel; and this may pass muster if we do not press it too literally and too far. He learns to sing by singing, of course; he learns to see by drawing or modelling; to touch and measure by cutting, etc., and he learns to know this personage, story-hero, fairy, animal, flower, tree, by being it, living with its life, imitating it. We conclude that everything

he sees and hears evokes a motor responsiveness in him; it comes loaded with motor suggestion and starts a process of motor reaction, a process that education may either inhibit or encourage. It is not necessary, however, that he should actually reenact the story he has heard, that he should *physically do* something about it; he may react imaginatively. As he recalls in the darkness the story of Red Riding Hood, he becomes in dramatic imagination, *i.e.* in the form of imaginative self-activity, both the horrible wolf and the unfortunate little maid, "the slayer and the slain." His is the self-obliterating imaginative sympathy of the poet: —

"This price the gods exact for song, —
That we become what we sing."

Children are poets in this sense: they, too, become what they see and hear; and, with a still greater intensity, what they admire and love. They might remain at bottom poets, they might bring to life the divine sympathies, the quick, deep fellow-feeling of the poets, if we would only deal tenderly with their marvellous gift.

It is because this imitative tendency and power, rooted in imaginative sympathy, plays or ought to play such an important part in our literary work, that at the cost of seeming irrelevancy, something more must be said about it. It is, whether she realizes it or not, the supreme instrument in the teacher's power. Understood in its broader sense, it alone explains the forma-

sive influence of literature and all the arts — an influence exercised so fatally for good or ill over the young, that Plato proposed to institute in his new Republic the severest sort of censorship over poets and artists solely in the interests of the young. This fatal power the teacher has at her command both through her personality, and through the characters and actions which are brought, by picture and song, before the mind's eye of the child. Through it, more than any reasoning or other power, the child learns to lisp and speak, learns the higher uses of language, learns to write well, to form a style, to borrow, to take fire, to admire and fathom and interpret the work of the masters.

No apology is needed for another reference to Plato, but the writer may preface it with the explanation that he has found no book more profoundly suggestive in his own practical work than the "Republic," and especially those chapters which are now so conveniently edited by Dr. Bosanquet under the title "The Education of the Young in the Republic of Plato." It is here that we have a treatment of the subject of imitation that cannot fail to be helpful and stimulating in the teaching of English. Let us take Walter Pater's convenient summary of it:—

"Imitation: it enters into the very fastnesses of character; and we, our souls, ourselves, are for ever imitating what we see and hear, the forms, the sounds which haunt our memories, our imagination. We imi-

tate not only if we play a part on the stage, but when we sit as spectators, while our thoughts follow the acting of another, when we read Homer and put ourselves lightly, fluently, into the place of those he describes: we imitate unconsciously the line and colour of the walls around us, the trees by the way-side; the animals we pet or make use of, the very dress we wear. Men, children are susceptible beings, in great measure conditioned by the mere look of their 'medium.' Like those insects, we might fancy, of which naturalists tell us, taking colour from the plants they lodge on, they will come to match with much servility the aspects of the world about them." ("Plato and Platonism," pp. 245-6.)

This is a much deeper and more fruitful conception than the one we commonly meet with — such, for example, as this, taken from a well-known work: "Imitation has to do with actions, external things that can be seen." Plato's doctrine illuminatingly explains to us that it is by virtue of the imitative tendency in us, and especially in children, that environment counts for so much in our lives. It is provoking us to subtle forms of imitation. Through our work in English, then, we are creating the spiritual environment of the child, — not the external environment of things and scenes, but the internal environment, the atmosphere shed about him by the presences with which he holds daily converse, — among them, those ideal imagined

presences, their thoughts and sayings and deeds, which literature brings into his field of intercourse.

This doctrine of imitation, which we must regard at the outset as such a supreme factor in our literary work, might receive suggestive illustration: we will cite only two examples. The first is from Walt Whitman:—

“There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he looked upon, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part
of the day,
Or for years or stretching cycles of years.
The early lilacs became part of this child. . . .”

The second, the most exquisite and most subtle expression in our literature, is in Wordsworth's familiar verses, beginning, “Three years she grew in sun and shower” (sometimes called “The Education of Nature”), wherein he sings how the great educator, Nature, by her companionship of the child, Lucy, will make of her a lady of her own:—

“And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.
*
The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round;
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.”

Kindergarten theory and practice have recognized the importance of the imitative instinct, and of giving

its scope in the responsive activities of the games and occupations. We do not allow it half enough exercise in the subsequent grades, and we weaken it and replace it too early by appealing to reason. Nor has the teacher treated seriously enough her own influence—the influence of her habits of speech; her power to affect the child through suggestion, her tone of mind, the expressive, magnetic quality of her voice. The last is the most important of all—the sympathetic touch of the voice on the nature of the child. We hope we shall not tire by our reiteration of this fact; but it is the beginning of wisdom to recognize that the ear is the pathway, not only to the heart, as the French say, but to the mind. Speech comes before writing in the history of the child's, as of the race's, development; and it remains supreme in its power to reach the soul, to arouse and to charm, to convince and to inspire.

One further point, and we shall have reviewed the considerations which especially concern the beginnings of our work in the Kindergarten and the Primary Grades. We are indebted to Locke for many valuable ideas about education, but it is he who must bear the blame for that misleading simile which likens the child's mind to the blank sheet of paper or waxen tablet which awaits that scrawler, experience, and particularly the early random or bungling chirography of parent and tutor. If, instead of his image, we had laid hold of Comenius' simile of the seed that grows into shrub

and tree according to the laws of its own nature and the kind and quality of soil and elements which feed it, we should scarcely have blundered as we have in our treatment of the child. We should have followed then the Platonic conception of nurture. We should have regarded the child as a unit of simultaneously developing powers—stem, branch, bud, leaf, flower, fruit; feeling, sense, reason, will, imagination,—all expressing heterogeneously, in their turn and season, the multiform life of the being. We should have been observant of the seasonable moments for pruning and lopping, grafting and fertilizing; propping the overtaxed boughs, culling the windfalls, awaiting the moment of maturity before picking the fruit, as we do in tending our apple trees. But we have been too greedy for the early yield: we have dwarfed and damaged the trees. We have been chiefly blind to the fact, about which our modern genetic psychology is setting us right, that there are at work in the child, from the very first, all the interdependent powers that show themselves in well-articulated operation in the man. They are commingled and obscure, like the petals and pistils in the bud, but they have a certain separateness nevertheless.

We apply this view of the child to our task of English teaching by recognizing that the child is from the start using the powers—in their weak beginnings to be sure—which he will exercise in their strength in his

adult years. Thought, feeling, and will; fancy and imagination; wit and humor,—these are all in process of growth in the child, although some come more conspicuously and assertively into play than others, and are interwoven with them. Thus, thought cannot be vigorous until it has ample and proper materials to work with,—a body of sense impressions, percepts, and concepts; but there it is in its essence, in the first gropings of curiosity, the first efforts of memory. Similarly, we must recognize the child as being, from the beginning of our dealings with him, a workman in all the ways in which he will continue to work until he completes his course. He is already in the nursery engaged in composition; reproducing, inventing, describing what he has seen, narrating what has happened to him; arguing in his own against his sister's favor; persuading and coaxing mother or nurse to give him his way. He has begun to glean from the literature of the world; he will even discuss his texts, and ask for explanatory notes; he is memorizing, declaiming, dramatizing; he is guilty of talking "big" sometimes,—striving after style, we may say; he is helped to correct faulty grammar and syntax like any college freshman—all, of course, with the delightful unconsciousness of childhood. By and by we shall attend to these endeavors and capacities of his, one or more at a time, according to the order (if we can discover it) in which they show their maximum of

energy. But, we may observe, there never is a moment when any one of them is in total eclipse; it cannot be, because each is integrated with the rest. There is a certain order or logic of interdependence, as of that between the senses and the intellect before mentioned, and — most important to be observed in language work — that between knowledge and its expression. It is a commonplace of modern psychology that a child's power of speech lags far behind his power of thought, and is never quite commensurate with it — probably never is, in the oldest of us. "Mental power," as Professor Hinsdale puts it, "is in excess of linguistic power." We must be careful, accordingly, not to expect too much of the child in the way of expression; and must not be misled by the parrot-like attainments to which he is helped by his imitative capacity.

But the fact of which we must take special note in the first years of the child's development — a fact which the Kindergarten so wisely recognizes — is that language is only one, and, as yet, only a partially articulated and discriminated form of expression. His expressional means are complex, and in some ways he employs them much more artistically and naturally than we adults do. He does not so often attempt to express by language what can be better expressed in other ways. The Kindergarten recognizes the fact that he has many languages, words being only one

of these, and the most difficult for him to manage. For many of his sense impressions he has no verbal equivalent: very well, he will express or reproduce them by the sign-language of form and color. Gesture, pantomime, the representations possible in pencil, colored chalk, block, stick, slips of paper, and the other varied materials that are used in the Kindergarten,—these, because their function and province are better defined for the child, can be used with greater ease and sureness than language can. The bird on the tree is so much more readily presented to his satisfaction by a few adequately symbolic lines; its flight so much more readily described by the mimicry of arm-movement; its song and cry by the rough vocal imitation, than they can be told of by language. In other words, the child is naturally poly-lingual or poly-expressional. In the first place, then, we must not be too eager for verbal expression or mastery; and must not aim directly at it. Language training must be incidental, and it must be cautious, as tending to outrun the child's knowledge and powers of thought. The time-honored pedagogical formula, "things before words," "words through things," may be pedantically followed, to be sure; but it applies in its broad signification. Verbal precocity, and the glibness which generally goes with it, are as deplorable as they often are funny. The child will hunt for big game in words as in other things; and as a diversion the

chase is harmless enough; but if encouraged by teacher or parent, it will often work harm to the child. The safe attitude is one of seeming indifference to linguistic prowess. The glib child is often the parrot child, whose words have shallow content, and run away with him. "The most hopelessly dull," as Miss Wiltse says, "are the scatterbrained ones who catch and toss words, and facts even, from tongue-tips without turning them over in their own minds." It is the child of reserved, meditative habit, who deliberates before he speaks, and grips the matter of his thought, that is the more hopeful type.

CHAPTER IV

THE KINDERGARTEN (*continued*) AND THE PRIMARY GRADES

PASSING now to details, the leading points to be treated of will be the standards, habits, and devices of the teacher; the language of the child, and the methods of correction; memorizing and declamation; story-telling and the selection of stories.

As the child in the Kindergarten (and sometimes in the First Primary Grade) does not read or use books, the teacher is his text, his sole model and resource. Her vocabulary, idioms, constructions, ways of enunciation, the very tones of her voice, tend to become his without the corrective or complementary influence of books. She ought therefore to be especially careful to use correct, appropriate, and effective speech. We need not insist that it shall be correct speech; but there is some reason for insisting that it shall be appropriate. This does not mean that it shall be monosyllabic; but that it shall be ideal child's speech, tending always toward the graphic, concrete, imaginative. Let it be suggestive, as primitive speech is, by trope and figure. The child is a symbolist in language as in other things. His world is a picture-world; and,

to reach him, language must start pictures, just as Homer's epithets start the pictures of his gods and heroes: *Apollo the Far-darter, fleet-footed Achilles, ox-eyed Hera, horse-taming Diomedes, Hector of the glancing helm.*

Indeed, the Kindergarten and the Primary teacher have much to gain from Homer, as from the Norse epics and the literature of the early world generally, not only in the way of substance and story, but in the noble simplicity of their language, the language of the childhood of the world. For the childhood of to-day, also, things must be sketched in their large and salient features. It is not necessary to reduce expression to the colloquial level. The language may be here, as it should be throughout the course, a little in advance of the child's resources, and (in the more formal work, like story-telling) should be lifted by a certain dignity above the plane of ordinary talk when the subject calls for it, as would be the case *e.g.* in many of the myths. This practice will help to enlarge the child's vocabulary, will give a touch of novelty and importance to the work, and will gradually accustom him to literary English.

As story-teller, wherein her greatest strength must lie, the teacher ought to aim to embody certain characteristic virtues of the classic story-teller, — the *saga-man, rhapsodist, dervish, minstrel.* Of course the story must be skilfully and impressively put together, *achiev-*

ing unity of tone, consistent perspective, variety, suspense, climax, surprise, as these are called for. But there must also be the mastery of moods, the command of change of atmosphere and tone. The teacher, without the aid of lute or lyre, chant or interlude (although song may be introduced effectively sometimes), must be a magician of all childish moods, in the compass from grave to gay; able to touch lightly the minor chords that are needed to bring out the triumphant major passages. And this last and very important art she must likewise possess: the art of skilful repetition, of the refrain-like effects, the "leading motives," which recall central facts and effects. Of the obvious way in which repetition may be used, even to the verge of monotony and absurdity sometimes,—the *Arabella* and *Araminta* stories are samples.

As for the manner in which all this is to be done, there should be no discounting by husky, rasping voice. The teacher ought to know how to "beautify the spoken word" by clear, rich intonation; by delicate variations of expression; by faultless pronunciation and clear-cut enunciation. There may even allowably be a little exaggeration in these matters, inasmuch as children grasp at general effects, and so often get their vowel values wrong and their consonant endings clipped. Again, as little people are naturally dramatic and are given to gesturing, some appropriate, graceful

gesturing may be introduced. To do these things naturally, with composure and without the visible strain or effort to which children are so sensitive, is difficult, we know; but it must be striven for. The children will be natural and spontaneous only if the teacher is; and unless she is, she will find it difficult to tempt them into easy, artless self-expression. And here we pass naturally to the topic of the children's language and its correction.

The chief means available for developing the child's power of expression are the conversation and the reproduction. The free and easy conversation (with gentle repression of the voluble) is most important, and may be made to yield admirable results. Following the morning talk or the story, or growing out of some nature-work, it may be made the means of leading the child to record personal experiences and notions, to invent and embroider, until he gains fluency and confidence. He may be skilfully pressed to keep to the point, and trained in consecutiveness and relevancy. Reproduction of the teacher's story is more difficult; but if the right stories, carefully graded, are chosen, good results may be obtained. Not every story told to the child is suitable for reproduction. The story with well-defined beginning, middle, and end is obviously the best to begin with. If the parts are logically connected, one part will call for and suggest the next. Different types of

story will call for different treatment. Jack o' the Beanstalk, for instance, is a series of episodes, with no inevitable sequence: and therefore the teacher may well help freely in recalling the order. In Cinderella, on the other hand, the events must happen in a certain order, and that the child will discover for himself, if he has grasped the story in its unity. The story of Cinderella suggests also another line of development, the filling-in process. As the child's powers expand, descriptive touches may be added in the interest of dramatic realization—added by the teacher, as she repeats the story, to keep pace with the child's growing capabilities. Detail is a weariness to the child at first; and upon no score are book stories to be so frequently criticised as upon this,—that they halt too much over uneventful detail. We are too literal; not suggestive enough. All the great masters are tersely suggestive. The child is rightly bored by a great deal of our "fine" writing and talking.

It is strange, considering the prominent part that story-telling plays in the Kindergarten (and the important part which it ought to continue to play in the Elementary School), that so little is done to train the teacher in the science and art of story-telling. How much does the graduate from the training college know about the principles of construction? How closely has she studied the art of the great masters of the short story? Very little, we believe; and the story books, the

reproductions of myths and folk stories, show the lack plainly. They often violate all the fundamental laws of unity, coherence, proportion, etc. This deficiency ought to be made good. Surely, there should be a solid *course consisting of an appreciative and critical study* of such masters as Addison and Irving, Hawthorne and Poe, Harte and Stockton and Stevenson, Wilkins and Kipling, Maupassant, Daudet, Coppée, and Tolstoi; and with this should go a study of drama and dramatic construction, which has such pertinence in relation to the short story.

How shall the child's faults of language be corrected? Needless to say that at first we must not be too exacting. The child must not be nagged. As a rule, it is well in elementary work to confine one's attention to certain selected faults, to attack a few bad habits unweariedly, and let the rest go, to be dealt with later on. But this cannot be systematically done in the Kindergarten. It must suffice for the teacher to bear in mind that the great aim is to develop a linguistic conscience in the child;—that is, a recognition of the fact that there is a right and a wrong, a proper or polite, an improper or impolite, usage in language; but this must be gradually and delicately done, so as to put off as long as possible the day when language shall become an object of thought for the child. At first the teacher will try to correct by example, finding unsuspected openings for substituting the correct for the in-

correct expression which the child has used ; insensibly winning the child's ear to it and getting him unconsciously to employ it. In later grades she may unceremoniously correct the mistake, and get the child to substitute the correct expression. "People don't say 'ain't'; they say 'isn't.'" "It isn't proper to say 'sawr' and 'noo'; can't you say 'saw,' 'new'?" etc. In this, as in other similar matters, numerous devices will occur to the resourceful teacher. But, after all, it is by her own exemplary, winning ways of speech that she will do most to cultivate right habits in her children. Her prime duty is to make beautiful speech attractive : to send echoing through the life of the child, speech tones and forms, strong and fine, and colored with noble feeling, which shall awaken memories of early days. Gradually the boorishness and vulgarity, the indistinctness and clumsiness, the throatiness and nosiness, *against which she has been struggling, will improve by mere operation of the imitative instinct, by the inherent power of the more excellent way.*

The work in memorizing, and the declamation that goes with it, has much value also as a means of confirming the child in correct ways of speaking. But its greatest service is in storing the mind with the priceless treasure of the noblest thoughts and feelings that have been uttered by the race. Especially important is it to make the first impressions and memories, which are to impart a tone to one's spiritual system for life, rich

and pure enough to out-sing all baser and cruder songs, and to set the nitch of character. Readers of Matthew Arnold's suggestive essay on "The Study of Poetry" will recall his advice to them to carry in the memory, and to apply as touchstones in the valuation of poetry, great lines and passages drawn from the works of the masters. Insensibly and fumblingly we all do that: our standard is fixed by what we like best and recall oftenest. On this account we can perform no worthier office for the child than to set singing in its mind, in order to fashion the norm of his taste, poems and pieces selected with a fine scrupulousness. This does not mean that we are to be exclusive or rigorous in making our repertoire. On the contrary, we must be eclectic: we must draw upon the humorous and whimsical as well as upon the serious and pathetic (a limited supply of that); upon the nonsensical and the doggerel as well as upon the heroic and stately. And we shall err if we do not sound high above all minor tones the note of joy, gladness, exuberance.

In making our selection for memorizing, we may conveniently observe a broad distinction, commonly drawn in German schools, between those first-rate pieces which have upon them the stamp of permanence, that classic quality which fits them to be the "core" of the work, and those less important, quite passable pieces, which we touch on lightly and make use of to serve subsidiary ends. The pieces that

form our "core" are those that are to be carried forward from grade to grade, to be recalled and reused in new connections, and for comparative purposes, time and time again. To endear by repetition; to accumulate a common stock of old familiar songs that graft themselves deep in the affections and reveal gradually, as the child grows, their music and meaning,—this is a desideratum of every English course. We need to generate these feelings of welcome to old favorites in order, for one thing, to offset the precocious aversion in so many of our city-bred children to what is "stale" and "kiddish," and the hankering after what is novel and "grown-up." Besides, such a plan of selection is a boon to every teacher in the Grades. She will be glad to know definitely by what literary landmarks she can steer; upon what acquisitions she can rely in her own work. She will deftly make use of the old to aid in mastering the new. Much effective comparative work will be possible to her in the middle and higher grades. A child comes to her familiar with Tennyson's "Brook," let us say; she can turn his acquaintance to excellent account in combination with Lanier's "Song of the Chattahoochee." The result will be a deeper appreciation by the child of the old poem, which he will now see in new lights and a fresh perspective; and a more vivid and significant seizure of the new than would have been possible without the comparison.

As we have criticised the low standards which have governed the selection of poems and pieces in the Kindergarten and Elementary Grades, we must try to indicate what sort of standard should prevail. Let us begin by doing justice to the advance made in recent years; an advance that was first evident in such school or text-book collections as those of Mr. Horace Scudder ("Prose and Verse for Beginners"), and the "Heart of Oak" series edited by Professor Charles Eliot Norton. During the past three or four years several collections have come from the press which show an extension of this finer taste; and the collecting, thrashing, and winnowing that is now going on promise still better results in the near future. Whereas our Readers and Kindergarten collections have been composed of the sweepings of our educational journals, the preposterous "poetry" of the moralizing pedagogue, we are now using materials by Blake and Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning, Stevenson and Field, even Shakespeare (his delightful "swallow-flights of song") and the Bible. Even in the Kindergarten a few of these may be used—some of the simpler numbers from Stevenson, Tennyson, Sherman, are so used. The stock of such first-rate verse for the Kindergarten and even the first Primary Grade is, we know, limited; but not a great deal of it is wanted if we avail ourselves of the store of Mother Goose Melodies and traditional Nursery Rhymes and Singing Games—

which we think are, on nearly every pedagogical score, preferable to the "made-to-order" songs that pad our Kindergarten collections. What we plead for is recognition of a distinction between such poetry and the "specially prepared" rhymes. The one is worthy of being part of the permanent memorial store which the child should carry forward; the other is light baggage for the day's more trivial needs. We ought to be able to distinguish between such trifles as

Oh, look at the moon;
She is shining up there;
Oh, mother, she looks
Like a lamp in the air . . .

and such products of the Muse as

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you:
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing thro'!

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I:
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

These lines are by Christina Rossetti, and the increasing appreciation of her simple verse—not all of it flawless, by any means; too rough and broken, often—is full of good augury. It is the inevitable, spontaneous, birdlike quality of her verse, something like the sweet simplicity of Blake at his best in the "Songs of Innocence," of Shakespeare in such drifts

of thistle-down fancy as "Where the bee sucks," — it is this we want to know and feel when we see it, and fill the birdlike mouths of children with. Not a few of such strains might be garnered from the Celtic poets who are singing so blithely to-day the naïve fairy faith of Irish and Gaelic peasantry.

As to declamation by both teachers and pupils, the chief desiderata are clearness, slowness, and simplicity. It is desirable, where a poem or piece takes the dialogue form, to distribute the parts. Some of the Mother Goose verses — "Who killed Cock Robin?" — may be dealt with in this way; so, too, poems like "Who stole the Bird's Nest?" and "Over in the meadows where the clear pools shine." And, in passing, the temperate encouragement of the dramatizing instinct of the children may be commended, as tending to develop the imagination, the inventiveness, and the language of the child. Children love to act their fairy stories; to represent the town mouse and the country mouse, the Three Little Pigs, etc. These are the first attempts to convert indirect to direct quotation. It is needless to add that games, especially the old singing games, afford another indirect means of developing the linguistic, and especially the dramatic and mimetic, sense.

And now we come again full-circle to the difficult subject of story-telling, which we cannot treat in minute detail, but only in those larger aspects which have significance, not merely in the Kindergarten, but in the

Primary Grades generally. As to the kinds of stories to be selected, it must be borne in mind that the child is a denizen of two worlds, — the so-called real world of his prosaic elders, and the more vitally real world of fairy land, wonderland, make-believe, through-the-looking-glass, or what you will. He is trying to find himself, and must be helped to find himself, in these two worlds; the imperious, unyielding, law-ridden, yet fascinating and wonderful world of fact; the ideal, play-world of art. He has both something of the curiosity and scepticism of the scientist, and the creative, imaginative impulse of the artist. He makes his own world of fairy; and although he recognizes more and more that it is not a real, but a make-believe palace of pleasure, he remains in it because it allows him scope for his powers. These two worlds stand apart at first. As illustrating this, the writer recalls a telling story of Mr. Brander Matthews. A little boy, playing horse in the parlor, became convinced that his steed was thirsty. His amiable mother, who was by, thought to be the good fairy, and proffered a glass of water within her reach. Whereupon she received the well-merited rebuke: "Mamma, don't you know that a pertending horse must have pertending water?" The teacher must not lay herself open to this rebuke. In the end these two worlds of science and poetry, of fact and imagination, must be reconciled; but at first they stand wide apart. In one sense the world of make-

believe is as real, indeed more real, than its sister-world. The world peopled by Jack, Crusoe, Alice, Mowgli, is as real as is the world peopled for us grown-ups by Romeo and Juliet, Rosalind, Prospero, Miranda, Colombe. It must be used so as to develop the ethical and æsthetic content implied in the relations established between the people who inhabit it.

It is a mistake, often made, to press one world upon the child at the expense of the other. The realists spend their energies almost exclusively upon the attempt to relate the child to the actual world about him. Undoubtedly, as already stated, he is greatly interested in that world. Nevertheless, it is, to begin with, a shadow-world that pales before the dramatic reality of his world of make-believe. His heart is not in it, his imagination is not in it, as they are in his world apart; he generally concerns himself with it as the home of fairy powers, investing its objects, its animals, and living things with the humanized, fairy life of his creative, idealizing fancy.¹ We may the better do justice to this world of make-believe if we recognize it as the art world of his elders, that world of "feigned history," to use Bacon's words, wherein his mind finds "some shadow of satisfaction in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it;" a world that "doth raise and erect the

¹ The reader may be reminded of the fascinating way in which Stevenson bears testimony to this in his "Lantern-bearers," as Kenneth Graham also does in his "Golden Age."

mind by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things." Not therefore to cancel this real world of poetry, but to establish it in right and consistent relation to the other real world of science, must be our educational aim.

A helpful clew to this child's world of disentangled fact and fiction is primitive man, whose value is recognized in the culture-epoch conception which has been carried into experimental effect in a few schools. Only, here we have the other extreme: no allowance is made for the fact that the child is living in the twentieth century, and is forced to relate himself to the phenomena of the modern world. True, he is a myth-maker, an animist, a polytheist, with early Aryan and Persian, Greek and Roman; but he has to become, and is gradually becoming, a citizen of this scientific age. He approaches his problem of interpreting the life of his time from two ends, advancing with rapid, seven-leagued strides from the early world to the latter age, and working backward from his own age to the luminous dawn of history, — from appearances to their historic explanation.

Our stories must be selected accordingly. We shall try to do rough justice to these two worlds, or, as we prefer to put it, to the two alternating tempers and outlooks of childhood; to the embryo poet and embryo scientist; to the realist and the romanticist; to the

Platonist and the Aristotelian. On this account we shall feed him on stories of heroes, both mythical and historical; on the adventures of a Columbus, a Captain John Smith, and a Nansen, as well as of a Ulysses, a Crusoe, and a Sinbad. We shall weave for him "true stories" of the transactions of bee and bird, dog and horse; as well as the unverifiable life of the creatures of Alice's Wonderland, Uncle Remus's wood side, Mowgli's jungle. Folk-lore and fable, myth and legend, — Indian, Negro, Greek, Norse, Teutonic, and Celtic, — we need; but we also need history, biography, nature-narrative, — the story of the heroisms and wonders of the human and animal worlds.

CHAPTER V

LEARNING TO READ AND TO WRITE

I

THE problem of instruction in reading and writing is still the arena where the most vigorous encounters of the pedagogues of primary education take place. A decade or more ago it was chiefly the question of *how* to teach these that was fought out; a dispute admirably summed up in 1889 by President G. Stanley Hall in his monograph, "How to teach Reading" (Heath). Nowadays it is the more fundamental question of *when* to teach that is being debated, — the question raised in militant mood by Professor John Dewey in his article in the *Forum* of May, 1899. This is no new question,* to be sure; but it is one that has assumed new aspects. It resolves itself into the general question of the educational value and fitness, under the altered conditions of modern life, of reading and writing in the earliest years of school life. A marked tendency has recently shown itself to discount the high value generally put upon reading and writing heretofore, and as a consequence to alter radically the course of study in the Primary Grades. It will have been gathered from preceding pages that the writer is sympathetic toward this new

realistic tendency in modern education, but he believes that it may easily be pushed to harmful extremes. It may be well, therefore, to review the discussion.

"What sense is there," asks Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi in her interesting volume on "Primary Education" (Putnams), published in 1889 — "what sense is there, then, in beginning education with instruction in the arts of reading and writing?" (p 3). The emphasis of her objection, however, does not fall where Professor Dewey's does: it is psychological, whereas his is mainly sociological. She holds that early attention to reading and writing, to book-work, is wrong, because "the first intellectual faculties to be trained are perception and memory," and that, therefore, the child's first studies should be those which aid the development of these faculties, — the seasonable unfolding of faculties being, in her view, the proper aim of modern education.

To be brief in comment upon a familiar contention, this criticism reveals a danger of overlooking the very important part which language may play in the training of these very faculties of perception and memory. Clear expression is a mark of clear perception, and the effort to attain it involves the clarification of confused percepts. To remember is to reexpress. Perception and memory are not only developed in learning to read and write, but they soon find in reading and writing indispensable aids and tests. However, to press on to more important points, — Dr. Jacobi adds another time

honored objection: "To study words before things tends to impress the mind with a fatal belief in their superior importance; and to study expression before subjects of thought have been accumulated, is to cultivate the habit always prevalent in civilized life of talking fluently without having anything to say. To direct attention to sets of arbitrary signs before attention has been trained by contemplation of real objects, teaches the mind to place conventional and contingent facts on the same level with necessary truths. We thus weaken in advance the power of belief in necessity and reality." These last words strike deep into the ethics of the subject; but concerning the argument in general, we have only to point to the development of the Kindergarten and, under Kindergarten influences, of observational and manual work in the Elementary School, to show that these objections have lost a good deal of their old force. It is no longer sweepingly true — if we look at the work done in our best school systems — that modern education begins with the study of words. But, more than that, "instruction in the arts of reading and writing" does not imply, and never could imply, that the study of words (as if words were a system of hieroglyphics) could precede, or could be wholly separated from, the study of the things they symbolize; nor can it involve anything like exclusive preoccupation with expression before subjects of thought have been accumulated. The study of words *must* be, to no small extent, at least by

implication, the study of things, and the clarification and enrichment of the pupil's ideas about things. We may agree, then, with Dr. Jacobi, that undue emphasis has been and still is put upon words, and that things still suffer undue neglect. This, however, does not involve her extreme reaction against reading and writing, which in our opinion shuts its eyes to the deeper import of language and language-work.¹

Coming now to Professor Dewey's position, we would at once express our sympathy with the spirit of his protest against the undue prominence given to reading and writing in the early years of school life. We agree that too much time is devoted to it; that it is begun and pressed too exclusively at too early a date; that there are other important matters—manual training, science, nature-study, art, history—to be attended to; that reading, as it is generally taught, is too mechanical a method of getting intellectual satisfaction; that there are physiological reasons against the common method of learning and practising it; that it is too isolated from other interests, etc. And yet we cannot follow Professor Dewey in some of his reasonings; cannot see the wisdom of the extreme positions which his reaction against existing evils leads him to occupy.

If, despite agreement with Dr. Dewey in essentials,

¹On this subject see Laurie's defence of the formal side of language-study in his "Language and Linguistic Method," pp. 12-13, and Lectures II and VI.

we record here some dissents, it is because we believe that the subject needs further clarification. We should say, first of all, that we cannot see why he should so minimize the importance of reading and writing in modern life. The changed conditions of modern life which lessen, for him, their importance are: "the advent of quick and cheap mails, of easy and continuous travel and transportation, of the telegraph and telephone, the establishment of libraries, art galleries, literary clubs, the universal diffusion of cheap reading matter, newspapers and magazines of all kinds and grades." We can only wonder whether we are missing the point he intends to make, when we question how it is that these developments—the much larger part played in our lives by letter-writing and communication by telegram and telephone, the library, literary club, newspaper, and magazine—lessen the importance of reading and writing? And yet we go on to read: "The significance attaching to reading and writing, as primary and fundamental instruments of culture, has shrunk proportionately as the immanent intellectual life of society has quickened and multiplied. The result is that these studies lose their motive and motor force." To us it would seem, on the contrary, that reading and writing are more and more indispensable agencies in modern civilization. And so, to say that they are regarded by the child "as more or less arbitrary tasks which must be submitted to because one is going to that mysterious thing called a school,"

does not accord with our experience. There is nothing arbitrary to the child in being taught to master what he recognizes as indispensable factors in the life around him. He can go nowhere on his own account without them. His urban surroundings are full of irritating secrets and baffling hieroglyphics until the *abc's* are conquered. He is anxious to master these signs. He will not wait to be taught: if the school does not teach him, he will learn of himself. We are not now considering whether this is a fortunate ambition, or whether modern civilization, which depends so much upon print and script, is educationally advantageous to the child: that is another question.

Upon this further question we recognize the force of the attitude taken by Professor Dewey and those who think with him. It is dubitable whether the child ought not to be protected against a one-sided bookishness, against the tyranny of print and script, in the interests of a broader and more scientific culture. The modern child, says Dr. Dewey, is not getting the practical training which the child got upon the farm (in the old days when "life was in the main rural") through the contact with nature, the care of domestic animals, the cultivation of the soil, the spinning, weaving, etc. The school must make good this serious loss by manual work of various kinds. Very good; but the child in the good old days did both; and we can do both. The upshot of the argument is, however, not

that reading and writing should be excluded altogether from the first two or three years of school life, but should not monopolize the time, being combined with other studies, manual, naturalistic, etc. The child will advance more rapidly when there is more variety in his school work. It is easy to stupefy him with monotonous grind. The fault of the past has been that reading and writing have been both overtaught and mistaught. We shall gain time by losing some.

But the way is still barred, Dr. Dewey protests, by physiological considerations: "While there are undoubted exceptions, present physiological knowledge points to the age of about eight years as early enough for anything more than an incidental attention to visual and written language form," which means that in the first two years of school no sustained attention should be given to reading and writing. Experienced teachers testify, however, that the initial mechanical work should come earlier: that children of five, six, and seven take to it naturally; and that it becomes more and more distasteful as the child ages. Dr. Stanley Hall's testimony is to the same effect: "Most children show the culmination of interest in learning to read and write between five and eight." The physiological objections may be largely overcome by the use of large types in reading; and by large, free writing on the blackboard, and with large pencils on unlined paper.¹

¹The teacher will find the best advice on the subject in Professor

The fact is that we have to beware of being too fussy over this matter. We incline to make too much pother over what is, to an ordinarily bright child, a comparatively simple business. Children take naturally to reading and writing: it is our blundering and pedantry and routine teaching that have disgusted them. The moral of which is, not to postpone learning these things, but to teach them more naturally. "It is a common saying," Professor Dewey remarks, "among intelligent educators that they can go into a schoolroom and select the children who picked up reading at home: they read so much more naturally and intelligently." Exactly: they were not mistaught, —not thwarted and worried by incompetent teaching.

Professor Dewey's ideal is a high one, and commands a general assent: "The child should have a personal interest in what is read, a personal hunger for it, a personal power of satisfying the appetite;" and there is no great difficulty in meeting this requirement. Yet we feel the need of caution here. Ought the child to be held always to such high levels? Shall we never allow him the pleasure of mechanical conquest, without much care for the content of what he reads and writes? Shall we never indulge the common delight which children take in just random, routine effort? There is a danger of over-rationalizing early

Shaw's volume on "School Hygiene," in this series. The chapter on Handwriting will be found very helpful.

education. And we feel this danger menacing when Professor Dewey goes on to say that the adequate realization of his ideal "is impossible until the child comes to the reading material [clearly this is impossible at the outset, when mechanical difficulties demand so much attention] with a certain background of experience which makes him appreciate the difference between the trivial, the merely amusing and exciting, and that which has permanent and serious meaning." Alas! for the pedagogic child, sagely pondering "the difference between the merely amusing and that which has permanent meaning." He is already too much with us, this imp of precocity; and makes us long for the old-fashioned child who was not ashamed of being innocently trivial, and athirst for amusement and excitement—not too old for his years, not too grave and spectacled for frolic and nonsense. May he long be spared to us despite our anxious, ambitious pedagogues!

So one may reasonably sympathize with Professor Dewey's reaction against the old, strait-laced curriculum of reading, writing, and arithmetic in the interest of a broader and more realistic education, without going so far as he in postponing the conquest of them. By giving less time to them, by varying the work of the Primary Grades, by adopting better, less wasteful, and less injurious methods of teaching them, better results may be obtained, even in reading and writing them.

selves, and certainly in general education. What methods should be followed, we may now proceed to consider.

II

Any discussion of the subject of methods must take its start from President G. Stanley Hall's Monograph, before alluded to. Indeed, not much can be added to that; but a brief restatement of the case in the light of recent discussion is desirable for the sake of completeness.

Broadly speaking, there are two competing conceptions of the problem: one lays stress upon its mechanical aspect, the other upon its educational and culture significance. To the upholders of the first, learning to read is a prerequisite, technical accomplishment; it means mastering a scheme of notation or a set of tools; the gaining of a working command of an instrument which is afterward to be used to some educational purpose. It is comparable to getting to know the colors of the palette before beginning to paint: the notes of the violin before beginning to play. That this may be done, it is best to concentrate somewhat exclusively upon the mechanics of the work, so that the process (which calls mainly upon the memory) should be mastered as speedily as possible by all the ingenuities of the cram method. Then the real work of education, which can be done only by the aid of reading and writing, need be no longer delayed.

For the upholders of the second point of view (to speak broadly again) the process of learning to read is one from which valuable educational results may be obtained; it is in fact equally important with the result. The work may be done to some extent inductively, to afford scope to the child's observing, synthesizing, and generalizing powers. The training of the mind to grasp a thought as a whole, of the ear to make accurate distinctions of sounds, of the eye to rapid synthesis of impressions, of the tongue to correct articulation, of the motor activities of the hand to accuracy of movement,—all these aims may be made to converge in securing the one result. Learning to read, far from being the mere memorizing of certain symbols, is learning to appropriate and develop thought; it is thought-getting, as the phrase goes. The one thing to avoid is making the process merely mechanical. The mechanics of the process must be conquered by the way, gradually, yet all the more effectually.

The objections urged by the representatives of the first point of view to these arguments of the second party, would take something like this form: "You are asking too much of the child. One thing at a time, please. When you are urging the child to surmount one kind of obstacle, which taxes his sight-memory chiefly, don't ask him to cope also with the greater difficulties of learning to think and reason; don't tax his higher intellectual powers. The sooner the process

is mechanized, the sooner can the child attend to the subject-matter. Let him render the symbols first; utilize and interpret them afterward."

"This is unnatural," comes the rejoinder, "and it is abhorrent to the child. It is unnatural, because he cannot silence the reasoning powers if he would; it is abhorrent, because he hates to be a mere memory-machine. The unpervverted child reads for thought; he will not rest in the mechanics, but will proceed to turn his mechanical accomplishment to immediate account."

"But you forget," interposes the other side, "that he is all the time being tripped up by his lack of mechanical skill." And in such wise the *pros* and *cons* might be further argued.

Stating the difference between the two in technical terms, we may say that, for one side, the vital requirement is that a mastery of the mechanism and the acquiring of technical facility should precede the attempt to read in the sense of thought-getting, because the attempt to get the thought is hampered by the technical insufficiency; while for the other side the desire to master the thought is regarded as the motive dominating the attempt to decipher the thought-symbols. To one, reading and writing are the first indispensable means to and prerequisites of training and culture; to the other they are first steps and integral parts of such training and culture.

There is an informing juxtaposition of the arguments of these two schools in the Language Number of the *New York Teachers' Monographs*. Superintendent Charles W. Dean writes on "Reading by Phonetics," arguing for the phonetic mastery of the printed and written symbol as the secret of reading. "The process is first mechanical, second intellectual. Our printed language is conventional. The transferal of the printed symbol to the mind is a mechanical process, depending upon the laws of optics. The interpretation of these symbols by which thought is obtained, is the intellectual part of the process. The child has made considerable advancement in thought-interpretation through the spoken language which has been addressed to him. He must now be trained to see the language just the same as he is already able to hear it. . . . The word is the unit of the visual grasp; the sentence is the unit of thought. A mastery of words is a first requisite."

Now hear, on the other side, Superintendent Eben H. Davis, as if in comment upon this: "If the main object be to cultivate skill and proficiency in pronouncing words individually at sight, regardless of their meaning, then the grouping of words according to sounds may be a very good method. If, on the other hand, the main object be to lead to thought-getting, naturalness of expression, and to a knowledge of the meaning and use of words, then there is a

more natural and expeditious method. The special advantage claimed for the thought-method of teaching reading is the fact that it enables us to direct attention to the sense or thought of what is to be read at the very outset, and before the words are presented as individuals. The thought or sentence is the unit of language, and this unit should be the first to claim attention. It is painful to hear children, in their early attempts at reading, begin to pronounce the words as individuals, one after another, before they have any appreciation of the sense."

One has only to consider these two views together to recognize the limitations of each, and to see that the one does not necessarily exclude the other. For instance, the sentence is the thought-unit, says Superintendent Davis; very true, we admit, but that admission will not prevent our saying, with Superintendent Dean, that a mastery of the whole sentence or thought-unit necessarily implies a mastery of all the parts; and that if the child is baffled by any one word in the sentence, the thought-result is unobtainable. On the other hand, as experience amply proves, a too close attention to the word, a too close dealing with it out of its sentence relations and without insistence upon the synthetic process of grasping the meaning of the whole, develops into mere parrotry. To the child, sentences are easier than isolated words, because they have meaning; that is to say, words are

more easily grasped in a context than when they stand alone, for the child is helped by (and naturally seeks) the associations that bind words together. That is how the child acquires a vocabulary before he goes to school. The end to be sought is clearly that stated by Superintendent Davis; the means must be, to some extent, those advocated by Superintendent Dean. We must say, with qualification, "to some extent," because we do not think he keeps all the means in view.

Without traversing ground already covered by President Hall in his pamphlet, we must conclude with him that the teacher must combine, or at least be ready in emergency to fall back upon, any methods suited to the needs of any type of child. We must provide for the eye-minded as well as for the ear-minded and the motor-minded child, and must call into concerted action the activities of mouth, ear, eye, and hand. We must agree that learning to read may be made a means to the training and refinement of all these powers, as well as of the reasoning powers, comparison, distinction, and generalization. This eclecticism introduces helpful variety into the work, stimulates interest, and, by multiplying the associations attached to words, embeds them more securely in the mind. It is because the late Superintendent Ward's method, with its skilful combination of the phonic and sentence method, has much of this many-sided

ness, that it may be especially commended to the teacher's attention.

As for learning to write, in its intimate connection with learning to read, while much may be said in favor of postponing it on physiological and other grounds, and using instead the letter-cards for word and sentence building, the fact to be weighed is that most children will learn of themselves, and will probably get into bad habits, if they are not taught by the teacher. Writing is a fascination to many children; and it is a wasted opportunity not to enlist their interest in it in connection with the task of teaching them to read. It represents the important motor-side of the "reading-writing" process. So, too, does work with the letter-cards, of course; and we think it wise that a certain amount of such work should be done from the outset. But the peculiar advantage of making an early start with writing is, that it becomes an intimate and organic part of the process of expression, makes blackboard work possible and easy, and is an aid to eye and tongue. It brings words closer to the child, and awakens his interest in their make-up.

One warning to the teacher, however: that is, to be content with rough results in penmanship at first. Learning to write is a difficult process, and may easily be bungled and made injurious to the child.¹

¹ We have already referred to the chapter on Handwriting in Professor Shaw's volume on "School Hygiene" in this series.

The practical conclusion of the whole matter is that it is desirable that the teacher should treat reading and writing as far as possible—that is, as early as possible without injuriously forcing the process of handwriting—as inter-connected processes; should at least be able to utilize all forms of mental connection,—name, form, and sound of word and letters, and the simple and associative memory; and should be able to employ at need all kinds of devices to these ends,—the use of objects and pictures, the chalk talk, sentence frame, word-building with letters and cards (in both script and print), writing, and even printing. She should be familiar with all the well-formulated methods,—Riverside, Ward's, McMurry's and the others alluded to in Dr. Stanley Hall's little book,—a knowledge of which is indispensable. Out of the study of these, and with a year or two of practice, will emerge her own individual method; that combination which she finds she can manage best,—only provided always that she is eclectic enough to reach all the leading types of mental organization.

One neglected point that may be briefly touched upon in conclusion, is the learning of the Alphabet. It is a mistake to omit this, as is sometimes done. It must be learned sometime, and most children will pick it up without effort. The easiest way is to learn it as a song,—not, however, to the neglect of the *abc* rhyme and picture book. The writer learned

it by means of a song, and has found that the catchy lay stuck at once in his own children's memory.

We have already expressed our conviction that quite too much of a fuss may be made over this comparatively simple matter—as it ought to be treated—of learning to read and write. But even in so simple and elementary and seemingly formal a task, the spirit in which the teaching is done is of first-rate importance. The teacher's thoughts must be on the process as well as on the results aimed at. She must remember that the processes to which children are submitted are always vitally important, because they affect the child's own mental procedure, and what Mr. Thurber has happily styled "the aggregate of mental habit and impression gathered by the way." We may so easily underrate the importance, for the future development of the child, of the associations that have clustered about the class exercise, the class room, and the teacher. It is well, in reviewing our efforts for a given period, to ask ourselves: Has the work depressed or braced the mind and character of our pupils? Has it developed power? In what attitude toward the subject have the pupils been left? There are no more important test questions than these; and by the answers to them must the ultimate success or failure of our efforts be judged, be the efforts with the beginner of five or the high school pupil of fifteen.

CHAPTER VI

READING IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

I. WHAT TO READ

IN this chapter we shall consider in general terms what to read. First of all, then, upon what principles shall the literature we use be selected? We may answer briefly that we must take into account the tastes and interests of the child; his powers of comprehension and appreciation; the needs of his emotional nature, as they determine the growth of character; and the scope, purpose, and structure of the course of study, by which the relation of English work to the other subjects of study is determined.

Let us dispose of the last point, correlation, first. Clearly, the nature and the extent of the correlation attempted will depend upon the general conception of education that underlies the course. In one case the correlating centre is geography, in another history, and so on. We shall not discuss here the claims of competing theories and schemes, Herbartian, Froebelian, and other. Our aim here is to consider, from the English teacher's point of view, what those

conditions are upon which any correlation of English with other studies ought to be carried out. We have especially in mind the danger which threatens literature when it falls into the benevolent hands of the system-maker and correlator,—the danger, namely, of losing sight of the fact that this study has claims of its own, which must be satisfied before the question of correlation is broached, and must be included in the curriculum with full recognition of these claims. Too often literature is reduced to the rôle of mere maid-in-waiting upon any and every usurper who commands her good offices.

Here is the danger; in this very fact that literature can be so accommodating. She has all kinds of wares (including even dry goods), in that eclectic pack of hers which is so easily rifled by the crotchet-monger. There is no large interest of life,—nature, science, man,—that is not the subject of her glorification and imaginative interpretation. She presses her claims in the interests of a complete, many-sided humanity. Her inexorable demand, however, is that everything she offers shall be seen from her own proper point of view, under the transfiguring aspect of beauty. The hobby-rider should dismount in her presence. Too often, however, he forgets his manners. The naturalist will lay violent hands upon her Bryants and Whittiers and Wordsworths to give a fillip to his nature-work. The historian will divert the historical plays of Shakespeare,

the historical romances of Scott and Kingsley, to bald historical uses, treating them as so many documents to give interest and concrete detail to his work. Once hand over Literature to any of these amiable devotees, intent only upon subject-matter and its illustrative uses, and she will soon be perverted from her true office to that of a mere huckster of knowledge. Once let the touchstone of choice be, not literary and poetic, but utilitarian and scientific, and your school readers will be a welter of trash (from the literary point of view), designed to subserve the minor purposes of miscellaneous information. We speak from observation: "Hiawatha," for example, will become a treatise on Indian civilization, or (more imposingly) the Indian culture-epoch; and good old Robinson Crusoe transformed (as we have often found him of late in the primary school) to a practising pedagogue who teaches little boys and girls how to count and weigh and measure, while his companionable Friday is reduced to a museum specimen of primitive man. This is an outrage. There is no reason, of course, why the general interests appealed to in reading "Hiawatha" or "Robinson Crusoe" should not be utilized in a secondary way in connection with work in other departments; but what we protest against is the practice of using these romances as pegs for all sorts of pedagogical livery. Thus, in using a poem like Tennyson's "Brook," our aim will be, instead of developing the geographical interest and knowledge of

the child, to help him to love brooks, to feel their manifold beauty and their life as a manifestation of the wonderful life that "rolls through all things." These works, when they are used at all for literary purposes, must make their appeal primarily and mainly to the child's imagination and sympathies, to his idealizing instinct, to his epic and dramatic tendencies. Nothing should be done to weaken or destroy these effects. Wise correlation will not do so; — correlation that is not forced, but is almost insensibly achieved; correlation that allows literature to be treated primarily as such, and only secondarily as aiding other studies.

Inevitably, also, that other unfortunate tendency gains headway when the effort to correlate is vigorous, — that is, the tendency to select second-rate literature, because it lends itself to the scheme of correlation. We have already criticised this failing, however; so we will now pass on to consider the other criteria by which our selection of reading matter should be guided.

As to the tastes and interests of the child, which are the best gauges of his comprehension, Comenius pointed out long ago that the child begins by being sweepingly encyclopedic in its interests. This must be recognized in our choice of literature, particularly in the early years. It must be varied, with gentle emphasis upon those interests which are found to be dominant in each period of growth. Always, however, these interests must be regarded as means or opportunities

whereby we may quicken and nourish those faculties of "admiration, hope and love," of courage and loyalty, which are the roots of worthy character and the sources of noble delight.

It is the larger things that are with a child from the first. There is great Nature everywhere around him. Even in the city he is vaguely conscious of the majestic march and the panoramic changes of her seasons, — those great primitive facts which are the background of the myths fashioned in the childhood of the race. Demeter, mother earth, with her dower of life and her gifts of day and night, the vast sky and the restless sea and the immovable hills, — let us strive to preserve in the child some awed, poetic sense of the presence of these familiar things.

But nearer to him than Nature is the human drama. Its simplest forms are found in the family, with its birthdays and festival occasions, its stories of ancestral experience and prowess, its cherished memories of parent and grandparent. Here are the foundations of historic and epic appreciation. This elementary interest in history is furthered by the anniversary celebrations of great national and world-significant events, — Thanksgiving, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Christmas, New Year, Easter, etc.; by the public commemoration of the great figures and heroes of history and legend, — Washington, Lincoln, and Columbus; the host who give names to our streets and buildings;

the shadowy presences that haunt childhood, — Santa Claus, St. Patrick, St. George; and those dim gods and demigods recalled by the names of the days of the week, — Thor and Woden and Freya: all the great company who multiply as the child grows, until they include those eminent writers and thinkers, scientists, explorers, martyrs, saints, who have made the world the marvellous home it is for us. A course of study which does not provide for turning all these occasions and interests to advantage in literary studies which secure their imaginative treatment, would be missing its most vital and impressive opportunities.

We shall seek, then, in the first instance for literature, — poetry more particularly, — that interprets to the child the simpler and more impressive facts of his own life, and those great abiding facts of nature and human life which come within the range of his notice and understanding. As to ethical characteristics, we must have literature that celebrates the duties and privileges of early childhood: love and compassion for all gentle things — for “the meanest flower that blows,” and for the weakest creature that breathes; the domestic virtues, filial love and obedience, brotherly and sisterly love; respect for elders and teachers, good-will and justice toward playmates and equals; veneration for the great and for the common weal; and courage, grit.

But because, as we have already insisted, the child can live only partially in the complex, modernized

world about him, and must rise to an understanding of its difficult phenomena by retracing the main steps of the race's growth, — valuable and legitimate opportunities for correlation will present themselves in connection with the work in history, and the study of occupations (with the manual work connected therewith) which goes along with it. It is the knowledge derived from these studies that makes not a little literary work possible. That is to say, Literature, not being an information study, must follow the child's conquests of information through his information studies and his experience, largely. Now it is because the child finds much to match his own naïve conceptions of things, and his own attempts to relate himself to the world around him, in the rude life and customs of Pueblo or Forest Indian or Esquimo, that he can get many a key to the meanings of his own environment by following the beginnings of civilization in these and other types of primitive life. This history work provides the knowledge necessary to a comprehension of certain poems and stories dealing with primitive life, enabling the child to live imaginatively in the world of which he reads in his literature — the world of "Hiawatha," the "Kalevala," and the "Ramayana"; the world of Hercules, Ulysses, and Jason; of Abraham, Joseph, and David; of the Irish and Welsh and Norse heroes.

Soon the child will pass on from this world to the

early history of his own country, which offers just the kind of epitome of the leading phases of social development that is needed,—the early voyagers and explorers (paralleling Ulysses and Jason), with Columbus for the heroic figure; early American colonization and settlement, which he can approach from a point of view more germane to the modern child than that involved in following the early, uncertain movements of ancient peoples; the pioneer and frontiersman, beginning with rude log cabin, axe, and cattle-ranch,—and so on, until the child gradually gains a first vague sense of the century-long march of the human race, and the rapid fore-shortened march of the equipped modern man in our own newly settled country. Thus embarked upon a study of modern American history and civilization, he is ready for the literature of native writers who have celebrated its heroes and achievements, “Paul Revere,” “Miles Standish,” etc.

Various plans have been suggested for the accomplishment of the general purpose we have outlined. We are concerned with them here only so far as they help to determine the fields from which we may cull our literary selections. When history and other information studies have done their work on the information side, poetry may do its on the imaginative and emotional side. Not that the two can be kept entirely distinct, especially in the first years of school life.

But we must remember that the child is at heart a poet in his mode of apprehension, and that poetry, as Aristotle said so significantly, is more earnest and more philosophical than history. Moreover, in the literary evolution of the race, verse has preceded prose. Therefore, not only by reason of its substance, but also by its form, poetry must be the staple of literary diet in the Primary Grades.

But we must never forget that the historical point of view and historical interest of which we have been speaking is, after all, partial and subsidiary. Great literature is self-sufficient. One needs no course in history to enjoy Shakespeare's historical plays. These deal largely with the abiding facts of human nature and experience. What have Jack the Giant-Killer, Cinderella, John Gilpin, Robinson Crusoe, Alice, Bo-Peep, Lucy Gray, Casabianca, Sinbad, to do with time and history? No more than have Rosalind and Miranda, Christian and Greatheart, Lorna Doone or Adam Bede, Raphael's Madonna, Millet's Sower, the Venus of Milo, or the Hermes of Praxiteles. These live in the Eternal Now of art.

The great difficulty we have to meet is to select literary expressions of the interests of childhood simple enough on the whole for the child's comprehension. We need not be too rigorous. It is not necessary that the child should comprehend every detail of what he reads or recites. The writer is

familiar with the case of a boy who, without knowing the meaning of many of the words used, received from certain parts of the liturgy of the Episcopal Church general impressions of awe and mystery and beauty which have dyed a life with their rich colors. There may well be something of such an unexplained yet affecting residuum of significance in the school experiences of the child. The condition, however, of such lasting and nourishing impressions is, as we have already insisted, that the works chosen for the child shall be first rate. For practice purposes, for mere touch-and-go acquaintance, for convenient filling-in, one may put up with inferior material. What is important is, as we have before insisted (see *ante*, pp. 49-52), that we shall not deceive ourselves as to quality. The teacher must know the first-rate, staple food from the second-rate, or the mere confections of the course.

As to the test of suitability, that must be chiefly experience and experiment. The suitable thing is preëminently the interesting thing, which grips and holds the child's attention and kindles his feelings; not the sensational, but the really affecting and impressive thing. Interest is, therefore, the first touchstone. Facility, the easy-word test, is misleading. The child will leap many a forbidding word-fence, if he is genuinely interested in the subject-matter. He scents something artificial and condescending in the easy-word version. It may be said in passing, indeed, that

the easy-word transliterator has much to answer for in his alterations of classic story into one and two syllabled absurdities for the tender digestion of the child. Stories that have reached a classic version had better be left alone. Occasionally a teacher with a touch of genius manages simplification well enough, but the usual result is deplorable. If a book — Hawthorne's "Wonder Book" is a case in point — is difficult reading for the child of the Third or even the Fourth Grade, let it wait, or let it be wisely used by the teacher to read to her class. It is the work as a whole, — subject-matter and form together, — the total impression, that counts; and only careful experiment can fully settle the question as to what piece makes a sufficiently deep impression to warrant one's using it in a given grade. Experience, then, must guide, — the experience of the wise teacher who aims to hit the golden mean, neither undertaxing the child's growing powers, nor yet straining a-tiptoe to overtrain them, which is by no means impossible. It remains to be added that for Primary children the interesting thing cannot be the long thing. The long story or poem, peddled out in small instalments, is an artistic and pedagogical absurdity.

Surveying available material, it is not likely that any of the many existing Primary Readers will be entirely satisfactory to the teacher who is trying to live up to a high standard. Sometimes the spread is too

thin; sometimes the good and bad are hopelessly jumbled; sometimes the pieces are not properly graded; sometimes there is a bat-like blindness to the long-accepted classics of child-literature, or, more frequently still, to the recent prolific contributions made to the child's book-shelf by writers whose genius lies in a new power of interpreting and enlisting the sympathies of childhood. We shall not get the satisfactory Reader until it is compiled by persons who combine two qualifications, — pedagogical insight to control the grading of the selections, and broad and fine literary culture. It is the last that is so conspicuously lacking in our Readers. The good teacher has still to glean for herself in the rich fields whose liberties are opened by collections such as those of Patmore, Palgrave, Lucas, the Lambs, Lang, Henley, Repplier, Whittier, and Scudder; and in the works of Stevenson, Riley, Field, Sherman, Christina Rossetti (whose poetry often soars unexpectedly into the high heaven of childhood), Celia Thaxter (whose instinct sometimes fails her), Edith Thomas, Kipling. As for prose, — the story, myth, legend and fable, — there has been such a recent harvesting of the lore of the ages and peoples as to embarrass us, — Lang's *Fairy Books* (Blue, White, and otherwise); Jacob's series of *Fairy Stories* (English, Celtic, Scandinavian, etc.); Scudder's selections in the excellent *Riverside* series; the *Children's Library* of Irish, Scotch, Finnish legend; numerous volumes

of Slavic, Celtic, Indian, and Negro lore (with Uncle Remus as master-narrator); Norse mythology in volumes like the "Heroes of Asgard" and adaptations by Mabie, Guerber, and others; Frost's adaptations of Scandinavian, Wagnerian, and Arthurian legend, etc. Then Kipling has added a new classic in the "Jungle Books"; while Stockton, Howells, Thompson-Seton (for children above ten), Macdonald, and others have made contributions of high quality; and the supply of humor and fun in Carroll, Lear, Herford, etc., runneth over. To these should be added some good collections of animal stories (Lang's for example), and short lives of famous men. The supply is more than ample.

Finally, it is under the heading of reading material that we must include the stories that are to be told and retold in the class. Story-telling should, as we have already urged, be an important part of the literary work in the Primary Grades. It is especially valuable (and our librarians are rapidly realizing this)¹ as a means of introducing children to good books, arousing interests, and awakening curiosities. The teacher may tell a story from the "Arabian Nights," and lead the children to read others in some volume of well-selected stories. It is an art to be cultivated both for its own sake, and because it opens an enticing path into the El Dorado of Letters.

¹ The admirable work being done under Mr. Anderson at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburg may be especially referred to. The results here are very encouraging, we are told.

CHAPTER VII

READING IN THE PRIMARY GRADES (*continued*)

II. HOW TO READ

IN making our selections for reading material for the several grades, we find certain difficult questions arising at the outset of our undertaking. For example, shall "Hiawatha," or parts of it, be read in the Second Grade, or the Fourth, or even later? The Second Grade child will relish parts of the poem, and do a certain amount of justice to them; but the Fourth Grade will get a much firmer grip on the whole of it, and will enjoy it even more. Or it may be a moot point as to where "Sir Launfal" should be taken, — in the Fifth Grade or the Seventh? or shall it be left for the High School, where it may have to be studied in any case to meet the college entrance requirements?

The general answer to such questions is: The choice depends partly upon the treatment proposed. The question of selection cannot be considered apart from the question of treatment. Let us make this clear.

Many of the great classics are meant for readers of all ages. They have, like a great picture (Raphael's Madonna, *e.g.*), a word for every one, because they ap-

peal primarily to the emotions; and the emotions, as Professor Stanley Hall has remarked, "are far more independent of age or culture than the intelligence." Certain brief strains of lyric rapture — such as Shakespeare's "Where the bee sucks," Tennyson's "Owl" — exercise their spell upon the child of seven as upon the child of threescore and ten. The truth of Wordsworth's "We are Seven," or of Emerson's "Fable" ("The Mountain and the Squirrel"), holds and spreads with ever widening circles of meaning from the morning to the eve of life. Why? Because, we repeat, they are primarily emotional in their appeal, and deal suggestively with very simple themes. Truth is "embodied in a tale," to use Tennyson's expression, which may then "enter in at lowly doors." It is because the poet speaks to the heart, wise with unlearned wisdom, because all beauty so speaks ("speaks all languages the rose") that the child-heart of all ages and climes understands him.

Hence, the first secret of a successful treatment of any great-little thing in art is to know how to present it so that it will make the right kind of emotional appeal within the range of the child's understanding of the subject-matter. "The little flower in the crannied wall" has one single word of cheer for the child's eye; but for the philosopher-poet it holds in its simple life the meaning of the mystery of things, knowing which — flower and root and all — he would

know "what God and man is." Wordsworth also illustrates frequently in his verse this unlimited emotional appeal which the commonest things, loved alike by old and young, make to the common heart of man.

So that when a teacher asks her principal whether such and such a poem is fit for a certain grade, the principal, if it is *prima facie* a possible poem, may properly put as his first question, "What are you going to do with it? Its fitness for that grade or another depends largely upon your treatment of it;—upon what points or aspects of it you will press and emphasize; what slight and slur." Some poems, more especially lyrics, such as those already cited, call for little comment,—how much, the teacher must divine from the character of its reception by the class. In the case *e.g.* of "Where the bee sucks," what more could be brought home even to an advanced class than that it is the summer song of a dainty fairy-spirit, Ariel, who, with Titania and Oberon for masters, inhabits the mysterious underworld of the grass and flowers? This understood, and the right atmosphere and mood being given by the teacher's reading and handling, the song will carry its own inexhaustible meaning, the music-teacher alone being able to give any additional aid of the right sort (*e.g.* Bishop's charming musical setting of it might help). To the little people, good pictures may give a suggestion of

the fairy creatures Titania and Oberon and Heartsease, — pictures of such quality as those to be found in the attractive volume *"To tell the King the Sky is Falling"* (John Lane). Poor pictures are worse than none: few are better than many.

But other kinds of poems, by their very nature, need very different treatment. Take, for instance, narrative poems or ballads; let it be Wordsworth's "Lucy Gray." It has difficulties, which, although the story is easy and touching, make it inexpedient for the teacher to try it earlier than in the Fourth or Fifth Grade. The abrupt transitions in the poem (after stanzas 3, 5, 8, 14), due to its quick and unexpected dramatic changes of scene; the unfamiliar English landscape, — "the wild," "the wide moor," "the minster-clock," "hawthorn hedge"; and the strange words like "faggot-band," "wanton," "blither," "mountain-roe," — how shall these things be dealt with? In the simplest possible manner. The teacher must rely in her attempts to make the poem tell, not upon comment and explanation, upon much talking and sentimental elaboration, but primarily upon vocal suggestion as she interprets the poem in her reading of it. She has herself felt, and would fain bring home to them, the beautiful suggestion of the introduction, — the solitary, elusive figure of the child seen only once at break of day upon that wide expanse of moor, companioned only by the fawn and hare and other

shy creatures like herself. The children must be helped in this way to seize effectually upon the setting of the scene ; must hear the chime of the minster-clock, look up at the moon sailing through the cloud-wrack in the stormy sky. Above all the teacher would like to have them respond to the magical touch at the end, completing the eerie suggestion, lightly made at the beginning, of the haunting presence of a child that only half belongs to our mortal world. Some of these things the teacher may, perhaps, get the child to perceive and feel, but only by most tactful and indirect methods. The story, the picture, must be made affectingly clear, and yet must not be stripped of its air of mystery and suggestion. How shall it be dealt with? Let us advance toward a solution of this question.

Let us put our question first in general terms : How shall we introduce a poem to a class? What room for diversity of opinion here! Shall the teacher read it first? Or the class? Or shall it be read and prepared at home? Or read silently in the class? Shall its introduction to the class be preceded by explanations and comment? Such are some of the questions to be answered. There is no rule of thumb here ; no law, as of the Medes and Persians, which alters not. Everything depends upon the poem, upon the aim of the teacher for the time being, and upon the attainments of her scholars. Some poems are so direct and simple

in meaning and appeal, that they will survive, little injured, an offhand, clumsy attack by the pupils. Other poems will probably be ruined by any such treatment.

The great importance of the first impression, the desirableness of making it strong, unified, memorable, has already been insisted upon; and we can only repeat, in this connection, that the key to the situation is in this requirement. It is obvious that in the Primary Grades, especially the First, Second, and Third, where the children's reading is stumbling, it is nearly always a great mistake to allow the first auditory impression of any piece to be made by any of the children themselves. The writer has known of cases where pieces have so been forever ruined, discolored, and disenchanting. On the other hand, equally well he knows of cases—even in the High School—where an indifferent student has been awakened, as from a stupor, by an impressive first reading by his teacher of, say, one of Shakespeare's plays, or one of Milton's shorter poems. The oral rendering has reached his emotional vitals for the first time in the boy's life. Hitherto, for that lad, literature, poetry, has meant the cold printed page, or the class exercise in reading and declamation; but now that he has been drawn close to Shakespeare, it means passion and power, the master-strokes of character, the thrill of situation and climax. So should it be, and in some cases we know

of, has been, with the little people of the Primary Grades. To them a poem ought not to mean, first of all, something to be puzzled out step by step; it ought not to figure before the mind as so many strips of difficult printed matter. The attempt to puzzle out the printed words must be prompted by an interest already aroused in the piece, evoking the desire to master it, to appropriate and render it.

But, comes the objection, this is to make the children too dependent upon the teacher, whose glib imitators they will be. It will mean running the risk of a facile vocal mimicry without thought or feeling behind it; and the children will be deprived of any opportunity to make an original effort. True, the teacher does "create" the poem; and the pupil must always see it somewhat through the lens of her personality. We realize certain dangers here that must be offset; but we must not make a bugbear of imitation. The flexible, circumspect teacher will have no difficulty in counteracting these possible effects. For example, sometimes choosing easy and suitable pieces, she will require the pupils "to create" the piece. She will also be careful, where she reads the poem, to minimize the tendency to mechanical mimicry or slavish imitation of her manner, by good work in developing the thoughts of the children. She will see to it that her pupils understand that her way of doing it is only one way, — hers, — and that theirs must necessarily be different. She will encourage genuine

original renderings. Then again she will be careful, as a rule, to read the piece which she introduces only once at the beginning (with perhaps a second reading to close the study of the piece); and she will allow time to elapse between her own readings and the attempts of the children. The purpose of her introductory reading has been to leave upon the child's mind a general total impression of the piece,—its spirit, its tone, its atmosphere,—and no more; and generally it will accomplish no more. She will immediately pass on to work with her class upon the content of the piece, to insure a mastery of the thought,—the web of the whole first, then the relation of the parts.

As nothing is more common than this indifference to securing a proper conception of a piece of literature as a whole, we may venture at this point, at the risk of repetition, to consider the matter more definitely and concretely. The writer recalls more than one popular—ay, so-called “standard”—Reader, in which fairly long poems and prose selections are cut up into slices to be carefully swallowed one at a time by the bewildered and meekly-expectant student. Imagine—and it is easy enough to do so with so many examples before one—imagine “Lucy Gray” so sliced and served! No conspectus of the story, no intimation of what is coming; nothing but the daily dole of slices. It is all plain to the mind's eye,—the anxious, cautious, monotonous reading, re-reading, and reading again of

the first stanza. Mary halts, or trips at "solitude." John will try to avoid the pitfall, but it takes Jennie to manage the verse. Then books are shut and the inquiry follows: What is the title? Spell "solitude." What does it mean? Look it up in the dictionary. Who has often been heard of? Had she ever been seen? Where? When? By whom? Where was she when he saw her? What kind of child was she? And so the pupil's examination of the parts at close range proceeds. The flower is grossly handled, and, petal by petal, torn to pieces before it has been seen and loved by the class. How mend all this? Well, let us try to suggest a better way. For convenience we print the poem here.

LUCY GRAY

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
— The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

*"To-night will be a stormy night —
You to the town must go ;
And take a lantern, child, to light
Your mother through the snow."*

**"That, father ! will I gladly do :
'Tis scarcely afternoon —
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the noon !"**

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band ;
He plied his work ; — and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb :
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept — and turning homeward, cried,
 “ In heaven we all shall meet ; ”
 — When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
 They tracked the footmarks small ;
 And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
 And by the long stone-wall.

And then an open field they crossed :
 The marks were still the same ;
 They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
 And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
 Those footmarks, one by one,
 Into the middle of the plank :
 And further there were none !

— Yet some maintain that to this day
 She is a living child ;
 That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
 Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
 And never looks behind ;
 And sings a solitary song
 That whistles in the wind.

The teacher decides that she will first read the chosen piece to her class, in order to secure the total epic or dramatic impression. She had better know the piece “by heart,” and be independent of the text. She

will talk a little about it, by way (1) of removing any easily removable difficulties, and of (2) inducing the right attitude and mood in the children. The story, she may explain, is about a little English child, Lucy Gray (the name is rapidly and informally written on the blackboard). She lived a lonely life, a solitary life on a moor. [Does any one know what a moor is?] Yet not so far away from the town but that she could hear the faint, distant chiming of the church-clock—the minster-clock. And so on, if further explanation is really necessary. That will depend upon the children. We must not overdo; better leave some things unexplained.

Then will come the teacher's reading; slow and simple to begin with, with just a little of the minor tone in it. Then a pause before the transition to the father's talk,—gravely hesitating,—with a suggestion of his glance at the sky,—“to-night will be a stormy night;” and Lucy's ready, glad reply (not sentimentalized!), as she too follows the father's glance at the sky: “And yonder is the moon.” Again a change to a quiet manner, in keeping with the father's quick resumption of his work, which is onomatopoeitically suggested by “snapped a faggot-band”; and then Lucy's instant, quiet obedience. Again a change to the blithesomeness of Lucy's happy movement (with care for the right relation of the first line to the remaining lines); and, yet once again, a quick

change, ominous of coming disaster — “The storm came on before its time ; ’ and the retarded, weighty last line — “But never reached the town.” Then a rather longer pause as the scene shifts to the parents. Their desponding story is told, until the sudden change of discovery — Ah, joy! She will be found! Then the exciting tracking of the footsteps — stage by stage — to the middle of the plank . . . “And further there were none.” — A pause — that is the whole story, alas! And then the beautiful epilogue in a changed, brighter manner — most difficult of all is this major strain after the minor, — the “Lucy Gray” motif, as the musicians would say, recalling for final picture the living child in all her sweetness and gayety, an abiding vision of beauty upon that lonesome wild.

So much for the reading, aiming at bringing the little drama in three acts, with its prologue and epilogue, vividly before the minds of the children. The impression, the bold outline, the tone, the atmosphere, are surely strong now, and secure. A few questions may follow, with the object of clearing up any difficulties and queries in the child’s mind; and then the necessary development work. The teacher, again, will first make sure that the story is clearly apprehended in all its stages: I. Prologue: The child in her lonely home; II. The errand; III. The storm and the missing child; IV. The search and its result; V. Epilogue: her memory.

Then the children are called upon to read the stanzas in their natural grouping; and as the reading proceeds, necessary questions are put to clear up such words and constructions as cause difficulty — no others. Following this, Lucy's character may be talked about. "What kind of girl was she? Let us see what is to be gathered from the verses." The poem may now be memorized; and a good, feeling, simple, yet firm interpretation secured. This work may always be lightened, and the poem kept fresh, by means of new questions and suggestions from the teacher. To supplement this work the children may learn, as freely and informally as may be, and with a minimum of explanation, some more of Wordsworth's exquisite poems on that other Lucy so early lost to him.

This foremost care for the fundamental properties of all great art—the whole and the organic interrelation of its parts; unity, and variety in unity—must be taken in every case. The child ought to have a complete and connected grasp of every literary whole, be it prose or verse,—be it Robinson Crusoe or the adventures of Jason and Ulysses. This indeed is what is meant by "comprehension," the power to hold a whole of numerous parts in the mind. It is a priceless conquest of intellectual and æsthetic training. It may have its time-honored beginnings with the nursery child in such interlocked verses as "The House that Jack Built," "The Old Woman and the

Stubborn Pig," and "The Egg in the Nest." But not every poem has the same vital, inevitable kind of unity that "Lucy Gray" has. Some poems possess a unity too obvious and insistent to call for any development at the teacher's hands; and therefore the foregoing method of treatment, or one following broadly the same lines, will not always apply. It will serve in all narrative prose and verse, — in the ballad, for example ("The Wreck of the Hesperus," "Casabianca," etc.). There is, to be concrete again, an irresistible unity through simplest similitude, in Mr. Sherman's little poem "A Dew Drop," and again on a large scale (the day and night idea) in his "Daisies"; and again a time-sequence unity in Stevenson's "The Sun's Travels" and "My bed is a boat"; also in Tennyson's "Owl" (Winter and Summer). The child will feel that. But take Stevenson's "Windy Nights." There we have a piece of impressionism; and any structural significance is lost in the two rapid galloppings of the mystical horsemen and the moaning of the wind in the trees.

For the reason that so much depends upon the vocal effect in the last-named piece — the well accented rhythm of the galloping, the onomatopoetic suggestiveness of the wind and its music, the low-toned weird effect of the haunted darkness — a first reading of this poem by the teacher is more obviously called for than is the reading of the others

we have mentioned. The same is true of such a poem as "Who stole the bird's nest?" with its suggestive mimicry that must not be overdone. Clearly, too, little or nothing is demanded in the way of explanation or comment. Contrast again with this a poem like Tennyson's "Brook," that calls for a little preliminary comment. Here we must secure rich and varying onomatopoeic effects, and must broaden our style of delivery as the little brook grows to a stream, a river, and at last widens into the sea.

For the rest, the following points, made some of them *en passant*, may be kept steadily in mind:—

1. The reading lesson is not—no, not even incidentally—a language lesson; and it is not a knowledge lesson. Therefore,

2. Do not burden it with grammatical work, or make a *corpus vile* of it for dissection. Clear up only those difficulties which stand in the way of an understanding of essential meanings, — sentence-structure (inversions, etc.) and difficult words. Do this in as clear-cut, thorough a way as the case allows—only remembering that in Literature words are used, not with scientific precision, but with literary suggestiveness.

3. Do not make the work studied a peg for miscellaneous dissertations. Do not wander far afield, out of near touch with the work. Explain allusions in such a way as to give them due subordination, and

so as to show that they are for the sake of the poem, that is, mere incidents in the development of the thought and emotion.

4. Do not overwork the dictionary. Dictionary meanings do not always hold in Literature; and, besides, we grow to meanings of words through familiarity, and do not master them at a single effort.

5. Let the discussion be on the plane of the style of the work studied. Keep the poetic tone and outlook in discussing poetry. Beware of vulgarizing and prosing.

6. This means using freely the language employed in the piece. Put questions involving answers in terms of this language, or vary it without lowering the tone. This familiarizes the children with it, helps to increase their working vocabulary, and at the same time involves a free, offhand paraphrasing of the poem.

7. Keep the parts of the lesson distinct. If you are working for construction, keep to that, and do not diverge into illustrative comment; if you are working for good reading, keep to that, and do not run into Grammar, or the explanation of allusions.

CHAPTER VIII

COMPOSITION, ORAL AND WRITTEN, IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

IN the complaints drawn up by the Colleges against the High Schools, it is the inability to write passably correct English that is most severely complained of. Where does the trouble begin? We have already indicated our opinion that it is in the Elementary Schools. Most assuredly it is anterior to the High School; for the difficulty the High School teacher has to cope with is the positive loathing with which the majority of the Freshman boys and girls regard "composition." What a burden is upon him! How difficult he finds it to overcome a long-standing antagonism, and to convert this bugbear into an angel of grace.

We must, of course, distribute the blame for this crippling condition of affairs over the Primary and Grammar Grades. We attribute it largely to the following general causes: (1) too much written work is asked for; (2) it is too labored, because we press for an excellence in form that is not to be expected from the young; (3) the compositions are often too long; (4) wrong topics are chosen, depriving the work of reality and interest for the child.

We have already spoken of the mistake, as we regard it, of replacing oral work by written, of educating the eye at the expense of the ear. We make these heavy demands upon children for written work because it presents comforting evidence that we are doing something, and that the children are producing work that shows a kind of progress. Results: we must have results of a finished, certifiable, measurable character. Parents demand them; officials demand them. In the neat copy-book, exercise-book, composition-book, are these outward and visible signs of proficiency marshalled. Oral work being so intangible and unmeasurable goes for little; although it is in fact the crucial, fundamental matter. What boots it that the child has gentler ways of speaking and address, and is taking to browsing in books? There must be something more visibly, tangibly, marketably conclusive that the child is being educated. And so we hurry the stripling into producing much misleading work, — the labored, mechanical outcome of painful drill, — uniform, squad-like, much supervised and tinkered by the anxious teacher.

This is all wrong. These prim products are unnatural to young children. We should expect from them rough, free, hearty work in writing. This does not mean slovenly, careless work; but it does mean sincere, childlike work. Good handwriting will come later; it is a monstrosity at this period; and we scarcely avoid

injuring the child when we press for it. In the child's art-work we are content with approximate excellence; there the rude, groping sincerity of the child's efforts in chalk or clay is the only thing that is æsthetically tolerable; the only sign of life. The painfully drawn type-form is an abnormality, — and much else besides. Then why demand the laboriously even, uniform piece of written work, which is obtained often by copying and recopying?

We must not be misunderstood as protesting against any sort of mechanical exercise in handwriting, pure and simple. Our special problem here is the relation of handwriting to composition; and the point to which we advance now is that in any composition work the child must, as far as possible, be untrammelled by anxiety as to his handwriting. Let his energies flow as unimpeded as may be into the work of saying fluently, in as passably good form as he can under the circumstances (instead of as he *must*, with copy-book standards before him), what he has in his mind. Just as he must not be worriedly groping after something to say, but trying to express what he holds in easy possession, — so must he not be too much troubled about his penmanship. Otherwise composition work becomes the drudgery it is. We inhibit the child's inventiveness and spontaneity, and we double and redouble toil because we prescribe ridiculous standards of mechanical facility. We must leave the child as far as

possible unhampered by any responsibilities other than those toward his topic; let him do justice to that; for that is his task, and not to produce a masterpiece of penmanship.

It is the difficulty of the mere mechanics of writing, in these early years, that should lead to our being careful, (1) not to ask for much written composition work in the first three years, and (2) to make each composition brief—from a short sentence at the very end of the first or in the second year, to a short paragraph or pair of paragraphs at the end of the third.

We are speaking only of written composition. Of oral composition there should be much more than is ordinarily done in our schools; and it should be more systematically and deliberately done. We can be much more careful than we usually are about the form of the sentences in which the child returns answer to our questions; about the form of his oral reproductions of stories told him; and about the coherency of his contributions to the conversations and class discussions. We can begin to train him to be connected and direct in his statements; we can check rambling and irrelevancy somewhat; and we can partially correct ill-usage. It is because we have not taken this oral work seriously as composition work, and, more than that, have not realized that as are a child's habits of oral expression, so will his habits of written expression tend to become,—or in

other words that his written language and the structure of his written work will be predetermined by his previously acquired oral habit and practice,—that we have slighted oral composition in the first three or four years of school life.

The beginning of the written work in either the First or Second Grade will necessarily be very simple, and will consist of short sentences, following the model of sentences copied from the blackboard, and others reproduced from memory; the classic type of self-sufficient sentence being of course the easy proverb and adage.

The handwriting may be large and bold, with pencil and (later on) pen, upon unlined paper. We must, we repeat, expect it to be uneven and crooked: it will come right in time, and meanwhile the child's nerves and finer muscles are being spared. Plenty of writing on the blackboard in a large and free way will be done; the children enjoy it. Most teachers find, we think, that when their children are not overtaxed, they write a good deal for play at home, and bring their work to school for approval.

The first original sentences may conveniently grow out of the reading lesson or the memorizing. For instance, we recall that at the end of the first year, in windy March, a class that had learned Robert Louis Stevenson's "Wind Song" proceeded, after a little stimulating conversation about the antics of the wind, to write a short sentence recording some one

observation or sentiment about the wind's pranks that morning. Perhaps, if the class has done well in its memorizing, they may be able to copy the first two lines of Stevenson's song from memory:—

“I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky.”

The words are short and easy. Along with the moderate practice in script will go, it must be remembered, much more work—including sentence-building with letter-cards: the children will build up the easier rhymes they have learned, and reproduce statements of fact drawn from their object lessons, history, etc. In general, it is for freedom rather than accuracy that we must aim.

Of written composition there will, in the second year, be much that is dictated by the class and by individual members of the class to the teacher, to be written by her upon the blackboard. This will be chiefly class work, coöperative work; for that, as Mrs. Spalding has well remarked in her valuable little book, “The Problem of Elementary Composition” (Heath), breaks the ice of shyness, hesitancy, and self-consciousness, gives confidence, and makes work richer and more worth while. The bright teach the dull, and there is an atmosphere of stimulation and suggestion thrown about the work. Nevertheless, individual work may occasionally be done.

In connection with their reading work the children

will learn incidentally and empirically the use of the capital at the beginning and the period at the end of the sentence.¹ They may easily be brought to see that these are needed conveniences to keep us from running sentence into sentence. By and by the comma will be called into requisition for equally obvious reasons. The enlargement of the vocabulary will come without spending effort; but it must be a constant aim on the teacher's part to familiarize the child with the book language that is so different from his own colloquialism. It is a mistake, we think, to meet the child always on his own colloquial level. The teacher must therefore make opportunities for the use by the children of the literary language met with in the stories and poems.

In the Second and Third Grades a greater fluency, ease, and spontaneity will be aimed at. The children will have more to say, and will say it more readily; so that the units (the masses) will grow inevitably from the sentence to the sentence-group, and the paragraph idea will emerge; for their reading matter will be in paragraph form, and the stanza-divisions of verse will further illustrate the paragraph idea.¹ Ideas of order, of connection, sequence, grouping of certain units, may now be pressed and elaborated. We cannot, it may be pointed out to the children, tell a story just anyhow; we cannot tell about a flower

¹ These points are enumerated in the Outline of Language Work to be found at the close of Part I; see pp. 225-232.

or an animal all at once, but one thing at a time and in its proper turn. If we are going to tell about a picnic, we shall not begin with the luncheon, because that did not come first in time, although first in our thoughts; if about a squirrel, we shall not begin with his tail, because he generally comes toward us head foremost; nor shall we skip from his head to his tail and then back to his head. The science work offers, in its demand for classification, the best, because the most natural and easy, method of beginning. "Come, children," says the teacher, chalk in hand, "let us see what we know about the squirrel, and how we should tell what we know if a little friend were to ask us, or if we are going to tell mother and father when we get home." And the class proceeds to contribute its knowledge, which is written down as it is given. "Now let us see if we have told things in their right order. What things belong together?" And so the facts are grouped, and the groups are in turn put into the best order suggested by the children. This, it must be most carefully noted, is not what is ordinarily or rhetorically called descriptive writing; it is natural history, the story of a creature's life, not of the looks and ways by which he may be distinguished from other creatures. Descriptive work is difficult for the small child, and is by no means the right work to begin with. Narration, the sequence of events in time-order, should come first. Description

should be merely an incident in narration. The narrative calls for similar treatment in order to get the proper arrangement of the facts.

Some teachers hold that the outline should be called into use from the outset. Professor Bain pushes this demand to its extreme, because of his conviction that language work should be entirely isolated from knowledge work; that the pupil should be asked to do only one thing at a time, and should be freed from concern about what he is going to say. He goes so far as to advise the teacher always to give the matter, give it in outline. This, we may venture to say, is bad psychology, because it too arbitrarily separates the thought-process from the expressional-process, matter from form, invention (or the substance of what we think and know about a thing) from the telling of it. Thought and form are twin-born, or at any rate we ought to try to have them so; and indubitably they ought to be so with children. To compose, means to express in well-ordered form our thoughts about a given subject; and when the child sets out to write a letter to a friend, he will have to provide the substance as well as to give it literary form. Professor Bain is unduly magnifying a precaution which the teacher must always take, that the subject upon which her pupils are asked to write is one upon which they have something, and enough, to say.

The objection to the early and wholesale use of

the outline is that it weakens the child's power to do what is one of its most valuable and difficult tasks, that is, to hold together in the mind, as a whole, the parts that compose a subject. How difficult, but how valuable, to be able to hold one's thoughts about a subject steadily before one, to see them in their totality, as a unit. This power of attention, of sustained thinking and contemplation of a thought-scheme taking shape in the mind, should be cultivated as far as possible from the first. The outline must not be used so continually as to give no chance to develop this power; let it rather serve as an aid to such development; be a temporary crutch, not a permanent support. The teacher may employ suggestion, hints in the form of leading questions, and models to give such aid; but let her rather show the child what he ought to be doing on his own account, — to think before he speaks: to think, not in scraps, but in masses; think his subject, not his words.

This is one of the commonest forms of incapacity in the High School and College student. He thinks and he writes in scraps and spasms. *Solvitur scribendo*: he positively cannot write on the basis of a plan; it fetters his — genius. He will scintillate, not glow; will ramble routeless and goalless until he finds himself at some lucky "there!" Ramble, saunter, dare, by all means, and occasionally set out to do nothing else; but invariably to trust to luck, is to catch an ignominious fall; for it is to fail in that

constructive, previsionary power which is required in all the higher activities of the human mind. One may alter one's plan, one may not even provide for details; but the teacher must aim at the beginning to make of the child something more than a happy-go-lucky improviser; must begin to make him see and feel that discourse must be orderly, must have arrangement; and that order and arrangement imply some scheme as a whole. And yet this, like everything else attempted in these uncertain early years, must be done with caution and tact. It is so easy by much drill and routine to stiffen the gait of a child's mind. It is better to err in the other direction.

To write but little original composition during the first three, or even four years, when the child is fettered by the mechanical difficulties of writing (which may be better coped with through work in copying and dictation); to lay foundations of good habit in oral work — conversation and reproduction and answers to questions in the recitation; to be content with rough though careful results; to ask for only short productions, simple in form, and (in the third and fourth grades) with the occasional use of the outline; and to exercise good sense in the choice of subjects, — this is the sum of our advice on the topic of this chapter.¹

¹ For the treatment of more specific points we must refer to the Outline on pp. 225-232. These details explain themselves, and we have thought it unnecessary to enumerate them here.

CHAPTER IX

READING IN THE GRAMMAR GRADES

I. WHAT TO READ

WHAT shall our children of Grammar School age (roughly, from ten to thirteen years old) read? This question subdivides itself into several that are less general: What shall they be required to read in school? What have opportunity to read, or be encouraged to read, out of school at their pleasure? What is to be the relation of this free home reading to required school reading? Shall they read much or little? A few good books, or many books as they come to hand? Shall they taste and sample for themselves in the large liberties of the public library, or be restricted to the narrow but indubitably wholesome diet of well-selected school or home library? Such are the initial questions that wait to be answered by both teacher and parent. Here we are concerned with the answers which the teacher may make; for the teacher is bound to face these problems as involved in her school task.

It were to be wished, for the sake of simplicity and security, that decisive, categorical answers might

be returned to these questions. But, we reiterate, there is no rule of thumb to fall back upon here. On the contrary, the experienced and well-read teacher (especially a parent-teacher) will be likely to answer to all these questions: "It doesn't matter very much: you may as well take your chances; it won't do to be too prescriptive and meddlesome;" or more cautiously, "There is no general answer, but only an answer relative to this or that particular child, and the average needs of this or that specific type of child-nature. This insensitive, narrow, hard, flighty child needs more than anything else the ministry of books; that voracious little reader, becoming more neurotic and unsociable over books in the chimney-corner, needs to be weaned from books." Yes, and we may add that lives of great men all remind us of this variableness. Sometimes we point rashly to Whittier, and cite his words thanking his stars that he was limited in his childish reading to a few good books; and so fortified we press on to an absolute conclusion favoring a similar parsimony. But when we recall other great writers who fed at richer tables, — Tennyson, Longfellow, Stevenson, and a host of others, — we realize that our conclusion cannot be made absolute.

On the whole, looking to certain modern tendencies, one inclines to lean toward Whittier's precedent, not so much because one believes in a paucity of good books, as because one fears the multitude of poor

ones, and the dangers of juvenile precocity in using books under the pressure of a one-sided literary ideal and ambition in education. Our reading lists are becoming so long; we are so anxious to control the home reading of our children, as well as their school reading; we are hedging them about by so many libraries, — school, class room, public libraries closely affiliated with the school, — that one is prompted to cry a halt. We can be too ambitious (as several of our recent courses of study show that we are); we can overfeed; we can overtrain and overstimulate. The only reliable safeguard is a sense of character values. The teacher must be governed by an imperious sense of her task as that of developing character in the broadest sense, and of using Literature as she uses all other studies, — only more powerfully because of its greater emotional appeal, — to illuminate and enhance the worth and glory of life and living, while training the pupil to the correct and effective use of language as a medium of communication. As a rule, the more magnetic and masterful a teacher is, especially as a wielder of words, the more careful must she be to keep her hands off her pupils; not to use books too tyrannically; not to assert her own literary preferences, or to work her own literary vein too dominantly; above all, never to misunderstand her office so seriously — even if she is a special teacher of English — as to aim to produce writers or actors or

librarians, instead of contributing an important element to the making of cultivated manhood and womanhood, and that many-sided interest that ought to be maintained during childhood.

But this *caveat* will apply to only a small (though powerful) constituency, either of teachers or taught. Despite the temporary and localized violence of the notion of certain library enthusiasts, that men, women, and children are to be saved by cultivating the library habit, there is little danger of a general plague of literary decadents. We must expect to swing to an extreme reaction against the old *régime*, —the sterile leanness and monotony of old-time literary diet of our Grammar Schools; but we are already settling down to a wise moderation, and a flexibility of adaptation to the variable needs of childhood that promises well.

So we shall be voicing the best opinion of the educational expert when we say generally, in reply to the questions with which we set out that, while we ought to read with our pupils in the Grammar School a good deal more than we used to read, we shall not attempt to take sole charge of the literary education of the child. The teacher or the librarian may well act as advisers and, within limits, as wardens of the child's literary destiny. In some cases, where there are no home influences or opportunities, the teacher cannot help standing *in loco parentis*; and a delicate

part it is to play. It is natural, too, that the child's school reading should suggest certain home reading; but it should do no more than suggest; it should not prescribe. The home should be expected to play its independent part, to develop independent literary appetites. The intellectual life of the child must not, if we can help it, be confined to school interests. Nor should it be a life of prescription merely. Some independence, — how much, the watchful parent must decide, — even to perverse wilfulness of choice, must be allowed, and at times even encouraged. Short of courting obvious danger, the child should have a chance to select its literary pasturage, unconscious of the peeping parental eye; browse at will, explore and taste, try and judge for itself. The best that can be done is to put the child by one means or another in the way of the best books; to give him a sense of being (subject to parental veto in extraordinary cases) a free agent in the selection of them; to open up suggestively new realms to him; talk over his reading with him; and enable him to possess those books he likes, among the really good ones, to re-read and read again, until he accumulates a select library of his own that has just the distinctive character of reflecting his deeper and more stable interests.

And now, these limitations on the scope of school reading being defined, let us ask what kinds of books and literary masterpieces we shall select for this com-

pulsory school reading and study? The answer generally comes fast enough: books and pieces that are likely to interest. The reading should follow the line of the children's interests. Very well; only we should add to interests, "needs." But we go on to ask, what are those interests? Who shall say? Very little of guiding value emerges from the studies reported by specialists and statisticians in our educational reviews and monographs. We note in the first place that interests change greatly with locality and the circumstances of children's lives. Next, — what is more important educationally, — that children are so imitative and impressionable, so open to suggestion and personal influence, that a clever teacher can direct her children's interests into almost any channel. In fact a child is the most abusable of creatures: nothing can be so easily bent and twisted and broken as its marvellously accommodating nature. A child is largely educated by its surroundings, human and natural; and chiefly by the interests and leadings of those whom it loves most, respects most, or, negatively, hates and fears most. It is for these reasons that such broken lights as to how to treat the child come, or can come, from those educators of the naturalistic or empirical school, whose motto is "follow the child; let the child lead;" those who assume a "fixed order of development," a progression from interest to interest. The child is rather a follower; it is the educator who, with wise forethought,

must lead. Not the child's whimsies and longings, but the educator's ideals, and his conception of the ends toward which the child should move step by step as his powers develop, must control our educational policy.

The factors that must mainly condition the educator's work are certain broad limitations of the child's powers of comprehension, and of his range of experience; and even these are not absolutely dictatorial. The powers of comprehension may be and often are abused or forced; while the child, like the adult, through his powers of imagination, — which is not chained to fact and may bring forth the forms of things unknown, — passes beyond the realm of actual experience into that of vicarious experience: he scales heaven, and descends into hell; he visits the unknown stars, and penetrates the untrodden jungle. A little experience goes a good way with him; and it is one of the supreme functions of literature to supplant this little by a large vicarious experience of a wholesome kind that shall gradually help to make him a citizen of the world instead of the little village of Yokelthorpe. Nevertheless, the child must not be asked to travel too far and too often from his familiar world; and when he does so, it must be with the aid of sufficient data — through picture, map, etc. — to enable him to find his way.

In selecting literature, then, for the child in the Grammar Grades, it must suffice to have regard to certain large facts about his development. His world

of men and things is growing wider and more populous; his mental grasp is increasing; his memory is more tenacious; he can hold more and more in his mind; he is probing more thoroughly into the causal connections of things; he is growing in power of observation and discrimination. He still sees things largely and objectively. His world is still the habitation of the great mythical and shadowy personages of the world's childhood; but it is also becoming peopled with modern heroes of industry and commerce, of the professions and the arts. He is still in what we may call his epic phase; and, as already remarked, the longer he remains in it the better.

It is this literature of the distinctively epic type that will interest him more than any other, and be good for him. This is our best clew. Adventure and romance, heroism and daring, the wonders and excitement of travel and exploration, of march and siege,—upon these we may feed him; and upon these, as sure foundations of the superstructure to be raised in later years, we may build. So we shall broaden his world and enlarge his sympathies, and give him a many-sided interest in all sorts and conditions of men and women, and in various callings and points of view, before he begins that adolescent work of introspection and self-analysis which tends to contract for a time his interests and sympathies. Above all, we shall surround him with a cloud of witnesses to the glory of courage and

nobility; we shall give him the companionship of the great, and the friendship of the true and tried, to win him to their likeness.

Not that this central epic interest should be exclusively cultivated. The interest in Nature will remain and grow apace, and the interest in the conquests and developments of civilization will be increasingly active. The lyric impulse, too, will persist and deepen; and it is through lyric poetry that we shall work for the chastening idealization of those primitive passions of anger, hate, devotion, and love into their higher forms of courage, loyalty, obedience, reverence.

Nor must we forget, in our general conspectus of the needs of the young, to include humor. Let the tonic breeze of genuine mirth sweep across our solemnity at times. Besides, our boys and girls need educating in humor; failing it, they feed upon cheap "smartness" or questionable jest, and their sense of fun narrows to horse-play and the practical joking that disgraces our college life, — disfigurement of public monuments and the like. So let us admit some of Mark Twain and Holmes and Saxe, Hood, Stockton, and Kipling. Then we may hope for fewer youths who, in the High School, vote down Sir Roger as a bore, Don Quixote as insufferable, and Lamb as always out of season.

It will be gathered from what we have just said, that our term "epic interest" is to be interpreted generously.

It is an interest that finds satisfaction through the pupil's studies in History and Geography, even more extensively than through Literature pure and simple. At this stage the two have not become differentiated. Columbus, like Ulysses, is a figure of epic proportions;

his voyages take their place with those of the much enduring Greek. The little *Mayflower* with her daring souls, Miles Standish and those years of strife against the Indian, are analogues of that sea-quest of Jason and those long years of strife before Troy. What epic quality they have! And rightly. History, at this stage, will answer to Carlyle's conception—the essence of innumerable biographies. It is half poetry; and the poetic glorification of it in commemorative poems should be a significant part of the history work. Similarly, in the wholesomest fiction,—Cooper, Scott, Kingsley, Dumas,—literature is the handmaiden of history, and oftentimes of history that is truer to ultimate reality than the heavily annotated page of the scientific historian. Plutarch again—to be used generously at this age of the child—and the “Book of Golden Deeds,” belong to both realms; and the same may be said, from the more definitely historical approach, of certain parts of Parkman and Green, Irving and Motley, which we shall do well to use, either in the leaflet or other available form,¹ or, more often, by reading to the class.

¹ Such leaflets are published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Maynard's English Classic Series includes Motley's “Peter the Great,” Prescott's

In his geography work also he will continually be brought into contact with the great discoverers, explorers, and voyagers; with great colonists, seamen, and merchants; with great figures of history who have lent their fame and given their names to the places of the globe. It is upon the combined cooperative influence of these three studies (to which, as in the Ethical Culture Schools, we may add the instruction in Ethics,) that we must rely to build up in the mind of the student such an impressive outlook upon the great highway of human progress and the epic march of man through the ages, such a reverent appreciation of the legacy of the centuries and the heroic efforts that have amassed it for our benefit, as shall inspire him to grateful and worthy efforts.

We shall make our heaviest draft, then, upon the literary masterpieces that present ideal types of the heroic, — men and women both, and great actions seen in heroic proportion. The literature of action, of character manifested through action, of virtue attested through deed, is what we want; and to get it, touched with something of elementary and simple grandeur, we must go to the grand epic ages of history, — to the epic of early Hebrew history, of Greek and Roman valor, of the age of Charlemagne and Roland, of Arthur and his

“Conquest of Mexico,” and their Historical Classical Readings parts of Parkman, Irving, Parton, etc. Some of the Old South Leaflets will serve, and so will volumes of Macmillan’s Historical Readings for Schools.

Knights, of Richard and his Crusaders, of Joan of Arc, of Puritan and Pilgrim, of Washington and the brave men who won American freedom. These we should like to make dominant in our course, so far as we can get them in appropriate literary form. Along with them will go the lesser epics of minor races and periods that have an indispensable function to play in our course. Without considering what may be ultimately possible in the coming time when the fast accumulating stories of epic legend from sources Oriental, Scandinavian, Finnish, Russian, Irish, Welsh, and what not, may be unlocked for our use—let us see, in a general way of course, what may be elaborated so far as this epic interest is concerned. The other factors we can consider later.

We may remind ourselves that already, in the Primary Grades, the child will probably have become acquainted with the epic cycles of Jack o' the Beanstalk and other nursery heroes, and with the stories of Hercules, Jason and Ulysses, Hiawatha, Siegfried, Baldur, and other heroes of classic, Indian, Teutonic, and Norse legend. He will, in the Fourth Grade, or Fifth Grade, perhaps, have read of these and other classic heroes in such books as commonly find place there: Kingsley's "Greek Heroes," Hawthorne's "Wonder Book," Lamb's "Adventures of Ulysses," Keary's "Heroes of Asgard," etc. At the same time, in stories like Ruskin's "King of the Golden River," and in short poems of the ballad order, — "The

Inchcape Rock," "Casabianca," "Lucy Gray," "The Wreck of the Hesperus,"—he will have broken the bounds of historic succession and the fences that separate ancient and modern, past and present, real and imaginary, and will be ready in the Grammar Grades for shorter epics like "Miles Standish," and some of Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn," "The Lays of Ancient Rome," and, later on, the great ballad-epics of our modern Homer, Sir Walter Scott, Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum," parts of Homer (in translation); while in prose he will advance to Hawthorne's stories, ("The Gray Champion" and stories of the simpler, sunnier, objective kind) to Washington Irving, Cooper, Scott, Kingsley, Dana, Dumas, and so on. Some courses of study include the King Arthur stories in the form of selections from Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." We should not go so far. The story might be read in Lanier's "Boys' King Arthur," or some other version; but "The Idylls of the King" should be one of the most impressive and fruitful studies in the High School course; and we would not break the force of the impression by an early study of some parts of the poem in the Elementary School. As developed by Tennyson, the story is especially suitable for the adolescent period.

And here we may interpose that we would rule out these three classes of works: (1) Whatever is touched with the more conscious, reflective sentiment of adult

love (e.g. in "Enoch Arden" and in "Idylls of the King"); (2) whatever is bathed in an atmosphere of settled gloom—many of Hawthorne's stories; and (3) whatever leads into the more solemn and darker mysteries of life. We have our doubts, for example, about Dickens' "Christmas Carol," unless read lightly, with some omissions, and with emphasis upon the jovial Christmas episodes. If the work is to be studied carefully as a whole, with its interplay of high sunlight and deep shadows, we should defer it to the second or third year of the High School. We are not concerned here with what children *may* be interested in, but what they *ought*, for their health's sake, to be interested in. The proper question, concerning each work of possible fitness, is: At what age will children get most out of the whole of it?—not, When will they get something out of parts of it?

It is quite unnecessary to use any dubious material. The higher we advance, the more perplexing is the wealth of available masterpieces. We ought to draw more freely than we do on ballad literature and the great stores of the world's epics. Not only do we fail to draw upon plentiful modern balladry, but we make all too little use of the anonymous folk-balladry that has been available since Child and others mined in this rich quarry. From Allingham's "Book of Ballads" (Golden Treasury Series), and from Professor Gummere's selections in his Volume of Ballad Litera-

ture (Athenæum Press Series), from the collections of Border Ballads and Jacobite Ballads in the "Canterbury Poets" and other accessible sources, many pieces might be gleaned, — pieces akin to the ballads of "Sir Patrick Spens" and "Kinmont Willie" and "Adam o' Gordon," which happily have begun to appear in our school collections along with some of the Robin Hood ballads and modern poems like Rossetti's "White Ship." Here the "Boys' Percy" will be of some service; and so, in this connection, be it said, will such monuments of heroic narrative in prose as the "Boys' Froissart" and "Boys' Mabinogion" in the same series (Scribners'). There is now a "Children's Froissart" (Appleton), of which some use might be made in the higher grades.

Gradually, it is to be hoped, we shall accumulate a recognized body of ballads which every schoolboy ought to know. There is such a thing in the "old countries." In England *e.g.* there is such a common stock-in-trade, — poems, recited over and over again on "speech days" and other public occasions, which most lads have learned before they leave Grammar School, — "The Burial of Sir John Moore" (first among these great short poems), "Hohenlinden," "Loss of the Royal George," "Alexander Selkirk," "The Destruction of Sennacherib," "The Mariners of England," "The Armada," "Lord Ullin's Daughter," "The Pleasant Isle of Aves," "The Revenge," and such like. Our own American poets have, of course, given us

many that will enlarge the English list. What we need is a standard collection of them all,—something rather more catholic and inclusive than either Henley's "Lyra Heroica" or Miss Repplier's "Book of Famous Verse," Allingham's "Ballad Book," or Montgomery's "Heroic Ballads"; some collection less scattered than the "Heart of Oak" and other good series of Readers provide.

As for the abounding and increasing wealth of epic material to which we have alluded, we would add another word or two. The time is coming, we hope, when parts of the Bible will be used freely; when the child will know by first-hand reading the stories of Abraham and Isaac, Joseph and Pharaoh, David and Goliath, and many others. Of many, many thousands of our public school children it is true that if they do not come to know these parts of the Bible in school, they will never know them.¹ An influence of incalculable worth in the formation of our speech disappears with the decline of the old-time familiarity with the Bible. The present writer can speak feelingly of the value of the practice that obtained in the schools of his childhood, of opening and closing each school session with the reading, a verse by each pupil,

¹ Every teacher should know Matthew Arnold's plea for such literary study of the Bible in his Preface to his Bible Reading for Schools, "The Prophecy of Israel's Restoration," as well as Professor Moulton's books on the Literary Study of the Bible.

of the greater portion of the Psalms and Proverbs of the Old Testament.

Much might be said in relation to the better appropriation through English literature of that second factor in the American child's spiritual heritage, the treasures of Greek and Roman story and song, thought and imagination. There is better work to be done here with a view to making the High School student feel more at home in the classic-romantic world of Chaucer and Spenser, Milton, Shakespeare, Tennyson, Longfellow, when he reaches it. A careful perusal of Gayley's "Classic Myths in English Literature" will show what measureless riches we may draw upon in order to repossess the young of that ancient world that must be known before one can use freely the works of the great writers we have named. Professor Gayley's admirable book covers Norse and Teutonic as well as classic mythology, — those other main sources to which English and German speaking people are carried back by mythological and legendary survivals in our days of the week, festivals like Yuletide, names of places, etc. We can do no more than cast a glance at a field which the narrative poems and the stories of William Morris and others have opened up. We do feel impelled, however, by considerations ethical as well as æsthetic, to suggest — especially with so considerable an Irish element in our population — that we shall be more alert to weave into our web

of legend a strand of Celtic mythology and lore. We are only beginning to realize how heavily we are indebted to Celtdom (not only through Arthurian romance, but also through mediæval romance and fairy-lore generally);¹ and, as Arnold showed us in his "Study of Celtic Literature," what a saving grace of style comes from Celtic sources. Of how much of charm and force, in its lofty ideals of womanhood and knightly valor this Celtic world is full, Renan's enthusiastic essay on "The Poetry of the Celtic Races" (to be found in English in the volume of Renan's shorter writings in Scott's "Camelot Classics") will bring home to us. It is difficult at present to obtain materials that are at all popularly available. The Mabinogion, in which we have the truest expression of Celtic genius, is to be drawn upon with some difficulty; but in the "Boys' Mabinogion," before mentioned, we have a valuable compilation from it that stands handy for the teacher's use. Joyce's Celtic Romances, S. C. Hall's Irish Legends, and Curtin's volumes, especially his "Hero Tales of Ireland," and, for fairy-lore, Croker's "Fairy Legends," will be found valuable; also a certain number of poems, such as Arnold's "St. Brandan" and Tennyson's "Voyage of Mældune," which enshrine some of the legends. A few poems from Sharp's "Lyra Celtica" will also be found appropriate for school use.

¹ "The source," Renan says, "of nearly all the romantic creations of Europe."

We will not force this plea for the use of Celtic material at the risk of ranging ourselves with certain faddists of the so-called "Celtic Renaissance." Our own enthusiasm is tempered by the knowledge that very little of the store of accessible Celtic story and legend can be used in its original form. Too many of the stories are singularly weak in construction — fail in unity, climax, coherence; ramble on and on, with many digressions and irrelevancies. However, the fineness, distinction, and charm of the Celtic spirit we need so much of, to season our Saxon and Teutonic bluntness, that we cannot help wishing that Ireland and Wales, Brittany and Gaelic Scotland, should have a little part with Hellas and the North in our world of legend.¹

To some teachers we may seem to be indulging in a too ambitious scheme, and may bring down upon us a charge of inconsistency, after what we have said against

¹Here are a few sentences from Renan to stimulate interest in Celtic literature on the score of its ethical quality: "There are none of those frightful vengeance which fill the 'Edda' and the 'Niebelungen.' Compare the Teutonic with the Gaelic hero, — Beowulf with Peredur, for example, — what a difference there is! In one all the horror of disgusting and blood-imbrued barbarism, the drunkenness of carnage, the disinterested taste, if I may say so, for destruction and death; in the other a profound sense of justice, a great height of personal pride, it is true, but also a great capacity for devotion, an exquisite loyalty. 'The Cymric hero, even in his wildest flights, seems possessed by habits of kindness and a warm sympathy with the weak. . . . Compare Guinevere or Iseult with those Scandinavian furies Gudrun and Chrimhilde, and you will avow that woman, such as chivalry conceived her, is a creation neither classical nor Christian nor Teutonic, but in reality Celtic."

vaulting ambitions in literary work. It is not nearly so ambitious as many schemes actually followed in some of our school systems. Let us remember that we are to provide four years' work. Let us remember, too, that not a little literature, biographical, historical, commemorative, is learned or becomes familiar in connection with school celebrations and festivals, and the work in music, and history, science, and geography.

It is proper that the poems and prose eulogies and elegies which recall the fame of our great national heroes, leaders, and martyrs, and of great patron saints like St. George, St. Patrick, St. Valentine, and St. Crispin, should cluster naturally around their names in association with anniversary exercises; that poems and sketches celebrating the seasons, and their birds and flowers, should link themselves with seasonal work in science, and with the celebrations and nature-festivals of Easter, Lady Day, May Day, Midsummer, Thanksgiving and Harvest Home (we might add the English Michaelmas and St. Martin's Day), Christmas and Yuletide, Candlemas, and others. Where there is daily assembly, there is no reason why all these beautiful old moribund feast days, still printed in our calendars, should not receive some recognition. When the work of preparation for them is distributed among the classes, the demand on time and energy is slight. In fact, the more we can connect Literature with life in this way, the more we can make Literature seem a

natural outgrowth of experience and history and aspiration; the more we can get children to feel that the great festal days of the race are the outgrowth of such feelings of gladness and sorrow and regret, as they themselves may be supposed to experience at such times — whether recalling the great dead who toiled for their benefit, or Nature's wonderful changes, — why, the more potent and natural and significant a thing will Literature become, and the more inevitably also will the poems and pieces intertwined with popular celebrations and festivals, become things of familiar lyric beauty. Literature must be less posingly Literature than it is, less bookish and task-given than it is, before it can become a vital force in the lives of people, and of young people especially. We do not think of the national anthem as literary (which is fortunate, because it will not stand a literary test), nor "Marching thro' Georgia," and other popular national songs; nor do we so think even of well-known hymns that have such patriotic and commemorative value as Emerson's noble "Concord Hymn." And all such productions that voice the mass-feelings, the communal instincts of peoples, — Scott's "Breathes there a Man," Burns's "A Man's a Man," Lowell's "Fatherland" and "Present Crisis," — preserve their vitality as expressions of emotions that sway the common heart of man lettered and unlettered.

We have passed in our last paragraph, it will be observed, from the question of the kind of Literature

to be studied to the question of how much. Upon our answer to that, the nature of our selections will partly depend. The first factors to be considered are the length of the masterpieces selected, and the rate of speed at which we shall read them. The principle of progression that has been governing our course, let us remember, is from the simple to the complex, from the shorter to the longer whole or unit of comprehension. In Literature, therefore, while the short poem and prose unit — the fable, story, speech — will have permanent place beside the large literary wholes, we shall be working to develop the power of steady and sustained interest in the lengthier forms of Literature, passing from shorter epic to longer, from short story to novel; from short dramatic ballad to the Shakespearean play. There is no higher discipline for the character, and no more effective literary training than this one of getting the mind to grip, with concentrated attention and with one synthesizing act of mastery, the many parts of a multiform whole of imagination, exposition, or argument.

But even here it is so easy to go astray. An illustration will serve. Acting on the sound principle that literary wholes of increasing length should be studied in the Grammar Grades, Scott's "Lady of the Lake" was assigned in a certain instance, we remember, to the highest grade. Graduation and subsequent admission to the High School were to depend upon

passing a successful examination upon the poem. So it had to be thoroughly studied; the whole term was to be devoted to it, with the prod of that fateful examination at the end. What sort of examination was it? One that assumed an almost word for word acquaintance with the poem,—its difficult words, allusions, constructions, and all; an examination that was almost exclusively a grammatical test and had no literary quality. What could be more mistaken and deadening? What could be more carefully devised to generate disgust—life-long disgust—with Literature? No wonder that, in view of the results required, the recommendations made to the poor teachers (whose inevitable first duty is to “pass” a high percentage of pupils) should run thus: The first reading is to be accomplished in ten lessons, and if not completed then, to be finished at home; the second more careful reading is to be for plot, character, analysis, etc., and is to take twenty lessons; the third is to occupy the rest of the term (fifty lessons or more), and is to deal with “*minutiæ*,” and to cover the memorizing of selected passages, and a biography of the author. We know by experience what to expect from the victims of this purgatory, this worrying and reworring, this mangling and remangling of a poem written by the innocent “Wizard of the North” to delight the souls of young and old. We recall the story of the boy who, to the question, “What do you know

of Julius Cæsar?" answered, "He wrote a difficult and boresome book for teaching Latin;" and we should forgive any of the aforesaid victims for entertaining of Scott the conception of a misguided rhymester who wrote poems to be used for public school examinations.

Surely, all this is too patently absurd and outrageous to need any commentary of condemnation. We are back in the dark days when "Paradise Lost" was put through the parsing mill in canto strips. We cite this quite recent case to point a warning against acting on the principle that the time to be spent on a work is to be proportioned to the length of the work; or that the longer works, toward which we advance in the upper Grammar Grades, are to be studied on the same microscopic terms as shorter ones. Deferring our remarks on method to our next chapter, and keeping in view now only one point as to *how much* we shall read, as it depends upon the time consumed by the lengthier works, we insist that it is better to avoid these lengthy works altogether than to spend so much time on them—even supposing it were wisely spent instead of foolishly, as in the case we have cited. There must be variety in the work of a term; and the different masterpieces must be read with a sole view to their distinctly literary values, and to promote literary insight and delight. If much labor on words, constructions,

allusions, etc. (those precious "minutiæ") is needed in order that a work may be understood, then it is mischosen for the grade. If it is used (save in the most incidental way) to help the pupils with their grammar, spelling, geography, it is misused, outraged. We would not exclude altogether laborious surgery upon selections; but for decency's sake we would have it conducted upon the more bloodless things, or in those cases in which the wounds will heal quickly and leave little scar. We must not "murder to dissect," nor must we vivisect to paltry purpose.

We should be less likely to offend in these ways if only we would bear in mind the distinctions drawn by Bacon in the familiar passage: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention." We must make these discriminations more and more carefully as we advance in our school course. We must include these various kinds of books in our course, and call for the exercise of these different capacities in our pupils: the power to taste of some books, swallow others, and chew and digest others; the power either to dip and skim, or to read straight ahead; or, at need, to wrestle, delve, toil indefatigably. So we shall read sometimes (*a*) tasteable books, like "Alice in Wonder-

land," — unless that book is to be reserved for the ingle nook, as we are disposed to reserve it; or Irving's "Sketch Book," or "Alhambra," or "Knickerbocker's New York," or the "Boys' King Arthur"; and (*b*) read-to-the-finish books like "Ivanhoe" or "The Talisman" or "Westward Ho!" or "The Pied Piper" or "Lady of the Lake"; and (*c*) read-carefully-every-word books, like some of the Wayside Inn Stories ("King Robert of Sicily," *e.g.*), "Snowbound," "The Great Stone Face," Gray's "Elegy," "Deserted Village." If we think rather of the length of the works, we shall, speaking in a rough general way, read (*a*) our long novels and poems rapidly for plot and character and historical bearing; (*b*) certain weightier short stories and shorter epics, essays, and nature sketches more carefully for structure and form, and closer character study; (*c*) certain short poems and sketches and speeches still more vigilantly for word values and imagery, for finer rhythms and word-music, as well as for severer discipline of the mind, — difficult thought-conquests, and the development of scholarly habits of reflection and patient, dogged exploration. In short, the higher we go, the more shall we observe the proper distinction drawn in the college entrance requirements between books to be studied and books to be read.

So that, along the line of these considerations, a way of classifying our reading material for the Grammar Grades will be this: —

A. Material in Reader—of which there should be one or more sets kept for class use, and distributed for such purpose only—for sight reading, to cultivate agility of mind, rapid seizure of thought, and clear, intelligent rendering. These will be pieces of minor importance, yet worth knowing; a single reading of which, a “touch-and-go” acquaintance with which, will suffice.

B. Other more difficult selections from the Reader to be read aloud, as a test of power of comprehension and emotional responsiveness, after a preliminary silent reading and careful consideration. These will be pieces to which more importance attaches.

C. Short poems or pieces to be read at home, silently or aloud (practice-reading aloud at home should sometimes be asked for), which have called for some research and annotation, or have had to be memorized. These will be the easier ballads and short narrative poems and pieces used for comparative purposes. For example, the class has in its hands “The Tales of a Wayside Inn.” It has been studying carefully and (relatively to its own capacities for such work) exhaustively “King Robert of Sicily.” The teacher will assign for more cursory, but still adequate, mastery with some definite aim, “The Bell of Atri,” or “The Birds of Killingworth.” Or, suppose that thorough work has been done on “Paul Revere’s Ride.” The teacher hands to the class for rapid comparative

study a copy of Browning's "Ride from Ghent to Aix." These pieces become part of a recognized school repertoire, for frequent reference and recall.

D. A few longer works — novels, or some of Scott's narrative poems (one each term, perhaps), that are to be read at home in a given time, and then discussed in class.

E. The works, short and moderately long, that form the "core" of the course, and receive careful treatment or thorough "study" in the class.

We have not included here the works read to the class by the teacher, which may be a little above the average reach of the class, the teacher aiding the interpretation. These may include selections from current literature, and pieces which the pupils are not likely to read themselves.

We close this long chapter by trying once again to counteract any impression which its necessarily concentrated treatment of a large subject may tend to produce, that, asseverations to the contrary notwithstanding, we are expecting too much. To begin with, we lay it down that (1) interest and delight must accompany all the work done in literature; and (2) that it shall be done with an air of happy and dignified leisure. We simply ask that opportunities for literary culture in the broadest sense, which we now fritter away, shall be wisely and economically utilized. For example, a great deal of the purely lyric

poetry with which the child should be familiarized, should come to him through song,—songs sung by the school in daily assembly; songs sung in his class room (related more specially to the work of the class) once or twice a day. A lyric impulse proper to childhood should overflow all the school work, and should be continually bursting into expression with something of spontaneous power. It should be as natural to take two or three minutes between recitations for a hearty song, as for recess and calisthenics. These songs will divide broadly into the Patriotic and the Humanitarian; (1) songs selected for the numerous commemorations of great men and events already alluded to; and (2) the nature songs used especially for nature festivals and, ordinarily, to keep march with the seasons (some of these to be sung by each class to the rest of the school).

Then there will be, besides this body of school and class songs, poems and prose selections recited at the commemorations and daily assemblies (contributions that are systematically provided by the classes in rotation). And for each class there will be the daily motto or proverb, couplet or question, class-song and play-song (singing games), recited in chorus.

What a life-abiding repertoire of songs and noble declamatory memorial verse our children might accumulate in this way alone! But we shall have to be much more careful in making our selections. We must

scrupulously stand by the best, and resolve to repeat these year by year. We are often very slack in our choosing, and we are corrupted by a passion for changing our materials and programmes continually. The "novel" programmes of unmitigated trash for Washington's Birthday and other occasions published in our educational journals tell a depressing story. We ought gradually to get together a permanent collection for every school, and depose an old favorite from this collection only when we find a new one that is indubitably better.¹

For the rest, supposing that in our leisurely way we read one classic novel a year (sometimes with a good class we might manage one a term—two a year), two moderately long narrative poems or epics, four short stories, four good ballads, six short prose selections (nature-sketches by Burroughs, Warner, etc., and parts of speeches), we shall graduate pupils who have accumulated in their four (or, counting the Primary Grade, eight) years, a precious treasure of no mean extent. And if our course is a unit, if every teacher knows definitely the heritage that each pupil brings with him, keeps reviving and recalling the masterpieces already studied for comparative and illustrative purposes, then these accumulations will last, and will root themselves deeper and deeper in the soil of character.

¹ On this head, see *ante*, pp. 49-50.

The price to be paid for these results is a proper systematization of the course of study, — which means chiefly, close coöperation and frequent consultation among the teachers of a school, the accomplishment of certain definite results in each grade, and the perpetual revitalization of these results as the course proceeds.

We seem to hear a swelling murmur of demands from the teachers, who want very definite points and recommendations, for answers to all sorts of questions untouched here, especially as to the works to be selected for each grade. We must refer to what we said in Chapter VII on this head. The grading of many selections must depend — we said there — upon the method of treatment. "The Ancient Mariner," *e.g.*, may be taken at any point between the fifth and the twelfth school year. It may be taken early and be repeated with advantage in the High School, to the delight of the maturer students, by whom its deeper meanings and richer music may now be appreciated. Weight should be given first of all to ethical considerations, — the ethical needs of the child. So far as purely literary considerations are concerned, the place of a masterpiece may be largely determined by the exigencies of the course of study. Purely historical considerations may control the introduction of poems like Longfellow's "Dutch Puritan," or Stedman's "Peter Stuyvesant," Tennyson's "Revenge" (which may take along with it Browning's "Hervé Riel," for compara-

tive values), or "Paul Revere's Ride." While many varying circumstances, at which we have glanced, quality of class, etc., must decide as to pieces that will not "correlate" — Gray's "Elegy," to cite a case. Where shall we put that? Our answer would be, Generally in the High School (where, as a matter of fact, it has proved a great favorite), because its grave, *sombre elegiac note should not sound for the young child.*

We have only to add that it is American writers and American themes that should predominate in the Grammar Grades,—love of country, love of its great men and women, love of its landscapes, its creatures and birds and flowers; love intense for its freedom and broad humanity. And yet not the Americanism that is vaunting and short-sighted—"a narrow and parochial Americanism." The phrase is Mr. Horace Scudder's, whose sentiments we echo. He very finely says that if we select "the inspiring, noble, luminous, and large-hearted American literature"—which should have the place of honor in our schools—it will check "a vulgar pride in country, and help the young to see humanity from the heights on which the masters of song have dwelt." We must not forget, as he goes on to remind us, that while "in the order of nature, the youth must be a citizen of his own country before he can become naturalized in the world, . . . yet in the same order there is an incipient, prophetic humanism

before there is a conscious nationalism, and this earlier stage of the mind requires food of its own."¹ We should say that this earlier stage of the mind should be continued, and that we must see to it, therefore, that our children draw unceasingly upon that larger world-literature that will help to make their large-hearted nationalism consonant with a still larger-hearted humanism.

¹ "Literature in School," pp. 29-30.

CHAPTER X

READING IN THE GRAMMAR GRADES (*Continued*)

II. METHODS OF TREATMENT

FAR less important than what we read—to reëcho a point already enforced—is *how* we read it. We would say to the teacher, chafing under official prescription as to reading books, “Unless your methods of treatment are seriously crippled (as they were by the results required in the aforesaid study of the ‘Lady of the Lake’), don’t worry and fret. It is hard lines, we admit, if your Superintendent or Principal should misclassify as literature a book like ‘Black Beauty,’ or ‘Ten Boys,’ that has its serviceable place in another field; but short of such galling misfortunes, there need be no discomfiture.”

To make our point here, we shall have recourse once more to illustration. We take as text a recently published article in our leading educational review that protests against the mechanism of prescription in High School work. We have only a partial sympathy, we confess, with this protest. The really deadly and deadening factor in our work is less here than in the teacher’s methods of treatment,—the lack of vitality,

sincerity, and sanity in her work. "The teachers of English," says the article, "should be allowed great liberty of programme, not pestered by any principle (!) or principal saying, 'This book shalt thou begin on such a day, for all others are doing the same,' and 'thus far shalt thou go, for so saith the Superintendent and the Committee of Ten.'" Unless one can look upon such restrictions as secondary matters, and give the first, commanding place in one's thoughts to the major consideration,—how best to redeem the time, little or much, now or then, allotted for the reading of this or that book (asking only that it shall be good literature),—one is still in the 'prentice stage of the craft. The article is a warning on this head. What grievance is voiced in it? This: that the teacher, forced to read four books of Pope's "Iliad" or two of "Paradise Lost," and no more, is made to sin against common sense. Why? Why not be glad of the chance to read so much? There need be no difficulty in sketching in a sufficient outline of the whole of which these are parts, to give them their setting, and in leaving an appetite for the missing parts. It is the sentences that follow, however, that carry us to the climax and point our moral: "Pupils should sweep on to enjoy, not only the sublimity of style and the grandeur of thought, but also the unconscious humor in which solemn John Milton deals. Consider Eve's domestic solicitude in preparing a

good lunch for the angel Gabriel! When Milton remarks as an *entrée*, 'No fear lest dinner cool,' the pupil looks forward to the patent dinner pail and the modern cook stove." Fortunate restriction, after all, we say, that stood in the way of this "funny," flippant treatment of the great epic, and of John Milton as a purveyor of humor, served up as an *entrée* at a meal. No restrictions could work so great a misfortune as such sins against sound judgment and good taste in aim and method. We have, most of us, to work under restrictions of one kind or another; and happily so; for the master in the art of teaching, no less than in other arts, is he who sees in limitations a condition of success, and knows how to convert them into gain. But limitations must be rightly apprehended; it is no real limitation to be compelled to eschew levity in dealing with "Paradise Lost," to refrain from associating with the angel Gabriel and that repast in Eden thoughts of the modern dinner pail and cook stove. Good taste, not official requirement, imposes that.

From this instance we see emerging a foremost principle that should guide the teacher in deciding what her method of treatment of any given work should be. What, let her ask, is the particular kind of effect the work is evidently fitted to produce, the kind of pleasure it is to communicate? In the case of Milton's epic, to keep to our examples, the teacher's

business is to treat the work so as to enable the student to feel and appreciate the elevation, the sublimity, the high seriousness of the poem, the magnificent pomp, the classic, "grand style" of the verse. For humor and the serio-comic, better seek a work of a different genus. First of all, herefore, she must study carefully the nature and characteristics of the work.

Her next consideration will be the limits within which these peculiar excellences of the work can be communicated to her pupils, the actual pupils of her present grade. How broad or how restricted must the treatment be? What shall be pressed, what touched lightly, what ignored altogether?

So, also, looking at her class, and to the special qualities—positive virtues and negative incapacities—relative culture, ignorance, prosiness, fineness, etc., she must decide upon the best mode of attack, and the lines of the presentation. Some teachers have one settled method of treatment for every kind of work, looking to a settled type of student. We think there should be a more delicate discrimination. The teacher should be sensitive to the mass-individuality of her class. Her first work with a class will be tentative, with the view of getting "the feel" of that individuality—the governing proclivities, tastes, ambitions, points of view, and responsiveness of the students. Again and again we have had to make a complete

tactical change in our plans — sometimes a sudden change, as certain weaknesses or excellences came unexpectedly into view.

So that our methods will have to be fixed and yet flexible. We must have general plans of treatment; and yet these must always be regarded as subject to revision and as needing adaptation according to the class we are teaching. There are to be six lessons on this work; ten on that. Let the scope of these and of each of them be definitely marked out.

There is no mechanism in this precision and planning. It is a condition of the highest kind of success. It is all in the interest of the spirit that giveth life. "Ah!" we heard a young painter exclaim in the presence of a lovely piece of work by an elder, "have you ever seen him at it? See! he just daubs a thumbful of paint on the canvas and works with it, plays with it, until it just *sings*." And that is what we are after in our craft too: to take just a few lines or many of a master, and thumb them and lip them until they "sing," and sing on, and recurringly sing. But to make either a great canvas or a great poem so sing, involves much dainty, bold, deliberative, patient work. We must plan, and yet the fire of feeling and admiration must survive and burn through our planning. But we insist on the definiteness of plan; on the elaboration that is itself true artistry.

Indefiniteness of aim is one of the worst pitfalls in

English work, the parent of confusion and superficiality. But let us be sure what we mean by definiteness and indefiniteness. An aim may be definitely indefinite; *that is, the teacher may well and safely determine to read to or with her class a certain short story or poem for the sake of an untroubled enjoyment of the situation or of the dramatic or humorous dialogue or what not, trusting, may be, to a little informal conversation after the reading to bring out any salient point.* Her definitely indefinite purpose, steadily and swiftly pursued, has been, we will suppose, to enrich her pupils' repertoire with one or more beautifully conceived characters or episodes that shall work in silent influence upon the character, and render ear and imagination more sensitive to further impressions. By and by there may be a reference to the story for comparative purposes; a knowledge of it may be assumed; its characters are henceforth familiar to the class, where the memory of them will be kept alive.

Let us suppose, *e.g.*, that the poem is Browning's "Incident of the French Camp." The poem is one for dramatic imagination and presentation. The treatment aims at vividness; it will be brief. A good vocal rendering by the teacher will clear up all difficulties. It matters little where Ratisbon is; attention is focussed on the speaker, and the two figures, Napoleon and the boy; Ratisbon is smoke-covered in the distance.

"You know we French stormed Ratisbon" — the

lines indicate the general character and position of the speaker: a veteran officer of Napoleon's Guard is telling the story to some fellow campaigners, perhaps conning old times at a convivial gathering. He stands before the fireplace where he can suggest the figure of *le petit Général*,—"with neck out-thrust," etc. There will be no trouble about the ellipses—"Just as perhaps he mused, my plans that soar," and others that follow. All such difficulties vanish in the teacher's reading,—her voice and gesture. A picture of Napoleon—Orchardson's "On Board the *Bellerophon*"—will aid.

Five minutes' preparatory reading and conversation: the poem is memorized, and next day recited; and henceforth it is one of the stock pieces of the class.

So with the same poet's "How they brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix," a poem of the same genre; where, however, the music of the galloping movement needs due emphasis. The scene once vividly gripped by the dramatic imagination, the details will take care of themselves. The poem sinks into the memory as a little drama.

The class, once in touch with either of these, will delight in and easily master others of the same kind. Bret Harte's "Chiquita" will go with the first; Scott's "Lochinvar" with the second.

From the most indefinite of definite aims to the most complexly definite, we pass through many possible

grades of detailed treatment. How detailed we should be, will depend on several considerations: the principal of these we have already stated, and we now go on to enforce by illustration. We must be careful, we have said, not to do any violence to a work by asking it to yield a different sort of pleasure, or illustrate a different kind of excellence from that dominant one which it was designed by its author to yield; nor must we try to use a work for any and every kind of exercise. Tennyson's poems on the "Sleeping Beauty," for instance, have a certain story interest which might be utilized; but they are principally and essentially descriptive and pictorial; and for such excellence will be used by the good teacher when her aims lie in that direction. Hawthorne's "Great Stone Face" or "Great Carbuncle" will not be taken for the plot interest, but rather as character studies, in which a certain idea is worked out as in a parable or allegory. Or again, we should not think, in studying Tennyson's "Revenge," of using it as an example of versification or for word-study: it is too difficult. Our attention concentrates on its dramatic interest and scenic background.

In showing the possibilities of treatment of Scott's "Lay of Rosabelle," in his admirable Introduction to his "Longer English Poems" Professor Hales enumerates no less than twelve ways in which the poem may be considered and handled; it may be 1, Memorized; 2, Recited; 3, Studied as a story in regard to structure;

4, Paraphrased or outlined; 5, Its historical setting and allusions (manners and customs) mastered; 6, Prosody mastered; 7, Its author, or signs of his character and connections, considered; 8, Grammar (accidence and syntax) cleared up; 9, Words studied as to derivation and history; 10, Figures grasped (metaphors expanded, etc.); 11, Poem criticised as to literary qualities (contrasts, speed, etc.); and, 12, After review of it, recitation in improved fashion, showing the gains in comprehension and appreciation that have accrued by the study.

Now such elaborate treatment might be justified in a High School class, although as a rule it is undesirable to maul short poems so unmercifully. Few poems so short as this, are so rich in opportunities. It is rich enough to lend itself to all these ends, if our class is equal to the work. But how foolish it would be to make this a uniform method of treatment. In the first place, as Professor Hales warns us, exhaustive treatment is not our ideal: appropriate emphasis is what we must get. Better poems may be found to bring into prominence some of the points enumerated. For example, the poem is not rich in figures; and it is too slight to hang a story of Scott's life upon. It commends itself chiefly as a masterpiece of condensed narrative—a little drama in three acts. We shall choose it, therefore, and use it, if we are required to do so, as a study in story-structure and movement. Be-

cause the story is so condensed, it is not easy to master. The writer has tried it, as a first test in the power of reproduction of narrative, on entering High School classes and an adult evening class. He read it twice, wrote the proper names and difficult words on the blackboard, and made a few necessary explanations. He found that few of the class had been able either to tell or to grasp the story. But then these students had never had any training in this direction in the Grammar School! Again, the diction is difficult, and so are some of the allusions. The versification is irregular, and can profitably be studied only by a class that is at ease in regular measures. These considerations will mark it out as unsuitable for any grade lower than the Seventh, or perhaps the Eighth, and then only when there has been preliminary training in story-telling and versification. Of course *something* may be made out of it in the lower grades; but the labor of explanation will be too great, tending to mar the beauty and deaden the appeal of the poem. Professor Hales' treatment, therefore, will be much too exhaustive for Grammar Grade purposes.

We have been speaking of the poem as a separate work, taken out of its setting in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." Here we are again involved in a distinction. If we take it as it comes in its place in the poem, it has an incidental character, a certain indefiniteness of function to fulfil, that will lead us to treat it in its more

general effect. It is a passing strain of music, intended to please largely by its musical character. The teacher will aim to compass this effect by doing justice to the sensuous charm of the poem, and by being as sparing as possible of dissection.

And here, with the mention of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," comes the prompting to use it to illustrate the manner in which we would have a long poem handled. We hold that one of Scott's long poems — this one or the "Lady of the Lake," or "Marmion" — should have an honored place in every Grammar School course, and that the Seventh or Eighth Grade is the grade for it. To our thinking, backed up by experience, the "Lay" has advantages over the other two that outweigh the disadvantage of a less entertaining plot. It is shorter, and has high literary qualities not found in the other poems. We have never found it "drag"; and it interests girls.

Let us say that we should time the introduction of the poem for the psychological moment (which must fluctuate with the quality of our classes) when the boys and girls are ready for Scott, for a Scott enthusiasm — perhaps after wild oats have been sowed with Optic, Alger, and other story-tellers. It is a misfortune for a boy or girl not to have come under Scott's wholesome spell, especially as most boys will, at some moment, have been ready to obey his summons, —

"Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife;
To all the sensual world proclaim
One crowded hour of glorious strife
Is worth an age without a name."

And so, when we have tried to work up to this desirable experience, we have taken one of the poems and one of the novels ("Quentin Durward," chosen also because of its comparative brevity) to accompany or follow it, and have used them so as to subserve this general purpose and lead our pupils into Scott-land, there to dwell for a while. This aim will have a bearing upon our method of treatment.¹

We have now a Seventh or Eighth Grade in mind. Let us assume that its members have already in the Fourth, Fifth, or Sixth Grades learned to read with zest and comprehension some long poems, — "The Bell of Atri," "Hiawatha," "Paul Revere's Ride," "Miles Standish," "Sohrab and Rustum," and parts of Homer. The teacher, approaching her task with all these data in mind, announces that to-morrow they will begin a new poem by Sir Walter Scott (Did they ever

¹ Experiences with Scott's poems and novels evidently differ. In some courses the poems and novels are introduced early into the Grammar Grades, *e.g.* selections from the "Lady of the Lake" into the fourth school year, as at the Horace Mann School; "Ivanhoe" and the "Talisman" into the fifth year; while the same poem or the "Lay" is recommended by Gayley and Bradley in their valuable little book, "English in the Secondary Schools," for first year, High School. We have tried, where we have found Scott virtually unknown by High School freshmen, to give him place; but the boy or girl of twelve ought to be ripe for him.

hear of him?), called the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." Then the significance of the title is explained; and is followed by an appetizing talk on Minstrelsy, connecting itself with what the children know about balladry and balladists, the ancient bards, the Homeric rhapsodists; the story-tellers in verse and prose of all times down to old "Uncle Remus," with his folk-lore and legend. Such episodes as those about King Arthur and Richard Cœur de Lion, given in the Introduction to Percy's "Reliques," may be woven in, and of course there will be especial attention to the Border ballads collected by Scott and others. The class is now expectantly ready for the reading by the teacher of the Introduction. This gives the opportunity for explanations as to time and place of the action, and the circumstances of knightly life in those days of love and war. The locality will be rapidly studied on the map, and the class made to feel at home with the most important of the unfamiliar place-names.

Every teacher with an ear for the stirring martial music of the first Canto, will be anxious to give it its due weight and swing; and so she will plan for the reading by herself, for the second lesson, of the best part of Canto I. Meantime, the class may be asked either to memorize the opening eighteen lines of the Introduction; or to look up some of the difficult words therein; or to read the story of the poem in the prose outlines prefixed to the Cantos.

The first five, or at most ten, minutes of the second recitation will be given to disposing of the task-work; and then the class will follow the teacher (well for her if she can draw all eyes from the books to herself) through the ringing, tramping measures of the Canto. What brave music! What clinking of armor and champing of steeds resound through it all!—

“Nine and twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall.”

Alack for the boy or girl whose heart does not beat time to the tramp and tread of the numbers!

And then come the crucial stanzas which outline the theme of the story,—vengeance and love; with which the teacher will have to deal skilfully. The lines are so musical, so fluid (as in the dialogue between the spirits) where they are not spirited, that progress ought to be easy.

And then, for the third recitation, perhaps, we have Deloraine's ride. Or perhaps, better still, the students may be asked to read of this at home and to follow the course of the journey on the map prefixed to their text-book.

In the fourth recitation, after making sure that the home task has been mastered, the teacher will continue with the reading of Canto II,—the famous description of Melrose Abbey (of which there may be a good picture, of course). Let the description be lightly but suggestively worked · it will not do to linger in it. Let

care be taken also that there is a clear conception of the story of Michael Scott, and of Deloraine's errand to him, and — what is a little perplexing — the meeting of Margaret and Henry of Cranstoun, with the subsequent ill-fated encounter (in Canto III) of Deloraine and Cranstoun, and the capture of the magic book by the dwarf. Nor should we fail to effect the proper marking off of those stanzas (II, 29–30 and 35, III, 1–2) which recall the harper and his audience in the lady's bower.

The reading should go rapidly forward, — some of it being done at home, the rest, for the present, by the teacher. It is essentially a poem to be read, full of music, of plentiful alliteration and onomatopœia, of rich rhyme, and a rhythm that varies greatly as to speed and resonance. The teacher must indeed know how to invest it with something of a minstrel's musical grace and strength. Meanwhile the class can be proceeding with the memorizing, or working upon allusions; and, above all, the teacher must make sure, and doubly sure, by asking for a summary of the story so far as it has been developed, that the class firmly holds the thread of the tale. But these things must be done rapidly, so as to delay as little as possible the swift first reading of the poem by the teacher (helped out by some home reading of the parts that may be slurred).

The teacher's best art will be required to communicate

the spirit, and the changeful moods of the poem,—as *e.g.* in Canto II, the uncanny greeting of Deloraine in the priest's cell, the momentary change from it to the beauties of the cloister and the star-lit, dewy night; the monk's eerie story of the death of the wizard Michael, when (as the line, so full of poetic quality, has it)—

“The banners waved without a blast;”

and the sudden shock of the death-like knell of the bell; and then the change from the darkness to the streaming light of the dawn on Cheviot's side, and finally,—demanding a marked difference in manner,—the early meeting of the lovers under the hawthorn tree.

Canto III also is full of variety, and there is in it one striking contrast,—the little nocturne that follows the bustle of the day's adventure (st. xxiv), full of peace; but a peace that is soon broken by the summoning blast of the warder's trumpet, which fills the courtyard with the hum of preparing warriors and the flash of swinging torches and shaken spears.

Canto IV moves rapidly, interrupted, however, by the story of how the Scots won Eskdale (which must be treated parenthetically, and may even be skipped because it is so obviously a digression). So also does the panoramic picture in the succeeding Canto (V) of the gathering of the forces, and the threatening conflict, the challenge, the single combat, and the result.

Much of this may be read by the students at home. Canto VI, with its famous opening, "Breathes there a man," — which will, of course, be memorized, — may be read in parts; but the greater part of it likewise may be assigned for home reading.

The poem has now been read once, — eagerly, feelingly read, let us hope, — and has made its impression as a whole. A good deal of the memorizing has been done in the course of the nine or ten recitations, or more. This is a good half of the work. Now for some more detailed work on (1) the story, (2) the characters, and (3) the language. The story may be boldly outlined by the pupils. It should be broken up in the light of the leading idea of the poem; first, into its large divisions and episodes, which in turn should be broken up into sub-episodes. The outline should, by its form, show clearly this subordination of the minor to the major episodes. This will give opportunities for good oral reproduction; and it will be well to work in one or two helpful written exercises, — *e.g.* on the character and fortunes of the minstrel, bringing together the scattered portions which have reference to him.

Then will come the second reading by the pupils. It will not be necessary to read every word. Select only the important passages, filling in the gaps by summarizing and reproduction; and as the poem is thus reviewed and re-read, many of the difficulties — those constructions, allusions, and strange words that stand

in the way of comprehension — will be cleared up. To attempt to clear them all up would be a folly. Let the teacher select those that are worth while, and do not involve difficulties beyond the reach of the scholars. The key-note of this part of the work must be interpretation; everything attempted is to be for the sake of mastering and enjoying the poem. The poem is on no account to be used as an opportunity for drill in Grammar or Spelling or History.

The characters may be enumerated, briefly touched off with a sort of play-bill conciseness thus:—

1. Lady Scott, of Buccleuch, who swears vengeance upon the Kerrs for the murder of her husband, Lord Walter.
2. Margaret, her daughter, in love with Lord Cranstoun, who had fought against her father's clan.
3. Her son and heir, captured and held as hostage by the English, etc.

and then they may be discussed.

As for the study of the language and poetics of the poem, attention may be drawn — always with a view to the better enjoyment of the music of the verse — to the variable effects in the triple and quadruple rhyme and the medial rhyme, as quickening the speed of the poem; to the pleasantly varying length of the lines; to the effective use (in the best instances only) of alliteration and onomatopœia; and to the notable descriptive, picture-making passages (let the students express their

preferences: they may be asked which scene remains most vividly in the mind).

The poem offers some admirable opportunities for comparison. Deloraine's ride may be compared, as to its leading characteristics, with "Paul Revere's Ride," and Browning's "How they Brought the Good News" (there may even be a glance backward to childhood's favorite, "John Gilpin"). Which is most dramatic? Which most suggestive of the horse's galloping? Which concerns itself most with the scenery through which the riders pass? If the class has read "Ivanhoe" (and it is desirable that they should), many comparisons may be made, many parallelisms noted. Then the ballad of "Rosabelle" may be compared with "Lord Ullin's Daughter," and the lines "Breathes there a man," with Lowell's "Fatherland," or some other poem expressing love of country.

Finally, if the interest is sustained, there may be a glance at the life of Sir Walter Scott. We come upon his footsteps so often in the poem, his ancestry, his patriotism, the scenes of his life and exploration, that it is scarcely possible to avoid saying something about him. At least a lantern talk should be given. No set of slides is more easily procurable than those which relate to the scenes of Scott's life and poems.

If we summarize briefly the points that have been insisted upon in the treatment of this poem, as an example

of the longer works to be read in the Grammar Grades, they will be : —

1. Devise a good mode of approach ; arouse expectation ; create the right mood ; and by sketching in an interesting background, relate to the child's existing stock of knowledge and ideas.

2. Get an outlook upon the poem *as a whole* as rapidly as possible.

3. Let the children get the spirit of the thing, — the atmosphere, the beauty, and music. Try to make them *feel* their way. Enlist and quicken the imagination.

4. Yet, because clearness of comprehension and the sense of intellectual mastery is a condition and a source of pleasure, let the work be, step by step, clean and effective, but kept within assigned limits. Do not try to be *thorough*, in the sense of being exhaustive. There is a tact of abstinence. Children cannot learn everything at once. Decide what it is worth while to attempt, and do it well. Select only what is typical and salient in the work. Children should be habituated more and more, and come to see the importance more and more, of serious, sustained, and definite effort. To which we may add these general counsels : —

Beware of the dictionary : let it be a last resort. Use it as little as possible ; there is no magical virtue in it. Encourage the habit of getting at the meaning of a word through the context, which is far more important than a habit of facile dictionary hunting. Few words

have fixed values, anyhow; they take complexion from the company they are in. Discountenance a hasty, irresponsible questioning either of the teacher or the reference books; encourage pupils to seek for explanations in facts they already possess, — to con their stock and reflect upon it. To familiarize pupils with the meaning of a strange word, use it; bring it into your talk; bandy it with the pupils.

As for spelling, do not be fussy about it *in this connection*. Good reading, clear enunciation, and the ear training that goes with it, will do more for spelling than the routine of the spelling exercise. Write on the black-board words which are being generally misspelt, and let them be listed in the note-book, by way of providing for the eye-minded or motor-minded child, as well as for the ear-minded.

To many, what we have said above about the dictionary will be flat heresy; we therefore take occasion to enlarge our ideas about the general subject of reference hunting. There is a dogma of the new education that loves to celebrate the "laboratory method." Its first principle is that the child should never be told anything he can find out for himself. This principle, so fruitful in scientific work, may easily be abused in its application to Literature. In Science the pupil is thrown back upon observation and reasoning: in Literature, upon an encyclopædia recording other people's knowledge and thought. We, too, have tried the laboratory method,

have wasted much valuable time thereby, and inflicted much profitless drudgery upon the innocent. Of course we should help our scholars to find out things for themselves, and to know how to help themselves when no one is by; and sometimes we should insist upon their taking pains in research (for special reasons, always). But often the labor is not worth the pains. It retards the work needlessly, and leads to vexatious interruptions. We have known this sort of thing to happen: a reference to an unknown person occurred in a work being read, — Themistocles, let us say. "Ah," says the laboratory faddist, "stop here, class: you must all look up Themistocles to-night, and bring me a report upon him to-morrow. The biographical dictionary won't give you enough; you had better look up Plutarch's account." This sort of thing is a new pedantry. The student needs just so much information *on the spot* as will enable him to grasp the significance of the allusion; and the teacher is the most convenient referee. General, vague, indefinite references are bad; specific facts should be marked out. Some editors of our school texts are becoming very parsimonious of footnote explanations, and deal mainly in references to original sources; this requires from the student an amount of research and exploration that is outrageously out of proportion to any value to be gained by it; for Literature, we repeat, — or, at least, poetry, — is not an information study; and works that call for a well-stored

mind ("Paradise Lost") are well deferred to adult days.

Concerning correction and explanation, we have only to repeat that these should be made quickly, and as incidentally and suggestively as possible, so as not to interrupt the flow of the thought along the main line of advance, nor to check the momentum of the feeling.

The teacher's questions should be illuminating and suggestive, aiding interpretation, stirring the thought and imagination, and relating the subject-matter to the sense-experience and the knowledge of the child. The questions should preclude any guessing on the child's part. Trivial and superficial inquiries should be discouraged. The best way often to answer questions as to meaning, is to re-read the passage well.

CHAPTER XI

COMPOSITION IN THE GRAMMAR GRADES

EXPRESSION is natural and necessary to the child; and wherever there is expression, be the medium what it may, there is composition. If the medium is words, oral or written, the child is engaged in the process of literary composition. The task of the teacher is to help the child to refine this natural process, and to raise speaking and writing to the dignity of an art that shall make that converse agreeable and effective. Why,—since expression is thus natural and necessary,—why is the work of composition in school so frequently distasteful? Clearly, because we have gone about our business somehow in the wrong way;—too laboriously, too artificially, and with too little regard to the powers and inclinations of the child. It has been over-emphasized and mis-emphasized. It is one of the child's bogeys.

As a point of pure theory, we teachers are bound to admit that composition ought to grow naturally out of the child's school life,—out of the stimulus of his environment and experience, out of his reading

and learning, — more inevitably indeed than language or grammar work grows out of it.

For to the pure eye of pedagogy the child is normally a self-active, self-expressive being; the motor or impulsive side of its nature dominates it. The child likes to tell what he knows, fancies, dreams, speculates about; likes to speak it, shout it, sing it! Expression is in itself pleasurable; it is the completion of a process of reception and discharge, of stimulation and response, of self-mastery and self-knowledge through self-activity, which is akin to that of inspiration and expiration, or the systole and diastole of the heart. The aim of the teacher is to utilize this tendency as involving and promoting mental organization. To compose is to organize: you cannot get a well-organized product from a disorganized mind. This we would keep as the root idea of composition in the Grammar Grades. The teaching should be motivated by the desire to develop gradually in the child the power effectually to organize his knowledge and thought, his ideas and impressions; for this means that he will try to utter them, to project them. Standing ready for expression, they will seek expression. Well-possessed knowledge differs from ill-possessed by its being a generator of power that seeks an outlet.

To compose, as the derivation of the word implies, is to put one's thoughts together with a definite end

in view. This prescribed end (which must always be clearly apprehended and held) is the organizing principle in the light of which the child's ideas or knowledge about a given subject should be massed. The final result, therefore, of our work in composition ought to be that a child's mental possessions, instead of hanging loose and scrappy in his mind, are so grouped and interrelated, so available for orderly use, that he finds comparatively little difficulty in expressing them. He is not embarrassed by what he knows. His knowledge is not what we have called "cold storage" in his mind; it is alive with all sorts of orderly sociable relations; it is inclined to be communicative.

This, let us interpose, is subject to one very important proviso: that by no means every impression or idea received by the child is to be called forth. Some seeds implanted in the mind's soil must lie undisturbed to germinate later.¹

It stands to reason that this expressive work is dependent largely upon the way in which the materials of knowledge and thought have been presented to the child. If they have been disconnectedly presented, and lie disorderly in his mind, the more difficult will it be for him to express them in an orderly fashion. He does not know where to find what he knows. His knowledge is not power; it is an incumbrance,

¹ On this head. see *ante*, pp. 29-30.

a source of intellectual awkwardness. Hence he fumbles and falters when he attempts to express it. Good representation, effective expression, is dependent largely upon good presentation and effective impression. We say "largely," because some allowance should be made for the discursive, rambling tendencies of the child's mind. The child may desert at times the garden path for the trackless thicket; may be let loose from his hitching-post of method, and go untethered. In general, however, the constant aim of our teaching should be to cultivate a power and habit of orderly mental procedure. Hence the importance of relating intimately reception and expression,—the work in Literature with the work in Composition.

Order, then, or form, is to be the governing conception in our work. Good composition is fundamentally a matter of good form; and this sense of form may be developed, synthetically, through the reading and discussion of poems and stories that have a very obvious formal excellence, and, analytically, through work in outlining, and in reduction through the synopsis and the paraphrase.

The teacher in the Grammar Grades will be wise, we have said, to use the word Composition as seldom as possible, because it is important that Composition should not be set apart as a separate study. The student should be made to feel that all oral and

written work is composition. Everything he tries to say should be well said, that is, well composed: if it is not well said, it is not well known. So far as the word composition is used, let it be understood that the pupil is composing his thoughts and feelings and knowledge, and not mere words, sentences, and paragraphs. These are but the counters and moulds of thought. Then, as every subject necessitates both oral and written expression, the pupil should be expected, as a first attainment, to express himself clearly, concisely, correctly, and, if possible, aptly in all. His linguistic conscience must at all times be kept sensitive. Faulty oral work—the clumsy, incomplete sentence, bad grammar, the inappropriate word—is every whit as serious a defect in oral as in written work; and the excuse for dealing less deliberately and emphatically with it is that the correction of some errors is more difficult in the oral recitation than in the written; more dangerous too as interfering with the thought-process, while it unduly delays progress. The teacher, it may be said in passing, will find it necessary to leave certain kinds of errors uncorrected, and when she does correct, to do so swiftly and incidentally. If we say little more in this chapter concerning the importance of oral composition, it is because we have already expressed our convictions on the matter. The Grammar School teacher, no less than the Primary School teacher,

should set store on the well-told and well-reproduced story, exposition, and argument.

Now as to the kinds of composition. It will be found that the ordinary class-work calls for every kind,—Narration, Description, Exposition, and even Argument. For instance, Narration is called for preëminently in History work; Description, in Geography and Science; Exposition and Argument, in Arithmetic and History, and often in Geography. All these kinds must therefore find place in our plans. Like Monsieur Jourdain, the child will be a workman in each kind without knowing it.

We shall start from this consideration, and be guided in our plans of work, first of all, by the natural expressional demands of the school life. It is a mistake, we think, in the Grammar Grades to attempt a too consciously systematic differentiation of the several kinds of composition, or to be troubled by the old hard and fast systems of progressive classification. Let us not limit ourselves to Description and Narration, seeing that Exposition and Argument also must be sometimes the forms employed by the child in his work. The emphasis will naturally fall on the two easier kinds; the bulk of our labors will be in them; but we must make provision for the other two.

In thus recognizing that composition is integrated with so many subjects, we have not lost sight of the fact that every art has a logic of technique pecul-

ially its own, which must govern the method of teaching it. A course in manual training, for example, must be determined largely by the tool-using capacities of the child; there is a proper sequence of tasks that takes account of a line of development in mastering the handling of the tools. The same principle will hold in regard to the work in English Composition. But there ought to be less liability to go astray there. If a subject like History is being properly presented to the child, simply and clearly and connectedly, then the corresponding expressional or re-presentative work required of the child will fall within the scope of its powers.

Let us make this clear in a concrete way. Narration is a genus of many species, varying from simple to very complex. The simplest form is that of pure time-sequence, the single linear type, as in the relation of events in a given period of time, or the passage of a procession, with its simple Beginning, Middle, and End construction. Introduce the idea of a thread of connection between the incidents, involving a climax or conclusion,—as in a ceremony like the Inauguration of the President,—and we have a step forward in complexity. Introduce, further, a still more absolute logic of connection, as in a statement of events leading up to a declaration of war, or, still more complex, the reasoned movements of a battalion in a great fight, and we make still heavier demands upon the mental powers.

Now, of course, the teacher must keep in view the logic of technique, with its increasing difficulties, along with the expressional demands of the subject she is teaching; but she must be led into the first by way of the second. In our treatment here, therefore, we shall lead off with a consideration of the kinds of expressional activity proper to the child in his school environment; and then, cross-sectioning the subject, we shall outline what we may call perhaps the morphology of the different kinds of composition which we find the child practising.

First, then, as to the kinds of composition that grow out of his studies. Let us begin with History, already touched upon. History especially necessitates practice in Narration of all kinds: first of the simpler type governed by time-sequence, as in accounts of exploration and discovery, *e.g.* Champlain's; then (in higher grades) of the type governed by causal sequence, as in the movements of a campaign, — the first battles of the Revolution in New England; or, as is often called for, a combination of the two, as in the movements of the French and Indian Wars.

History, in fact, will supply topics which will involve the organization of knowledge for all sorts of purposes: for simple enumeration, calling for parallel or uniform construction (*e.g.* of the thirteen original states and their forms of government); for the comparison of two or more things, — as, *e.g.*, of the differences between

(a) the English Cavalier Colonists of Virginia, and the Puritan Colonists of New England, or, better still, a *more specific and restricted comparison of some traits of these*; or between (b) the varying motives which led to English, Spanish, Dutch, and French colonization. Again, comparative description may often be called for, as in the difference between the life of the Southern planter and of the Northern merchant and farmer. We shall also call for short but well-articulated and clearly organized biography, — “The Youth of Washington,” “The Varied Life of Captain John Smith,” “The Last Years of Columbus”; and we may proceed from the biography of incident to that of character.

Nor need the work in this subject be restrained within the field of actual fact. Imagination and fancy may be exercised, where the pupil's fund of knowledge is adequate. He may give pictures of past life in New York or Boston or Chicago, on the basis of definite data that have been carefully marshalled or reviewed. Sometimes he may venture imaginary conversations between great personages at critical or notable moments, or imaginary interviews with the great. How important it is to restrict the topic always, we shall insist upon presently. We know of few things more absurd than asking a child to write a Life of Washington in one hundred words. Wise limitations must be set always.

We have laid this stress on the work in History as

calling for almost all the leading varieties of composition. Let it be understood that in the Elementary School these compositions are required primarily in the interest of progress in History; — the orderly and accurate and graphic reproduction of events, the deepening and enlivening of the historic sense and imagination, the interpretation of human motive and action. Composition here is not something apart; it is the *expressional side of the History work*. The first of queries for the history teacher is — are the materials presented rightly “composed” in the pupil’s mind? The answer must be the pupil’s attempt to give them properly composed form in speech — oral and written. Needless to say, the outline, summary or epitome, will be found invaluable and indispensable in this connection.

The demands of other subjects might also be considered. There is Geography, for example, that, like History, needs vitalizing by the exercise of imagination. The emphasis alters here; it falls upon the descriptive rather than narrative order of composition. Here we have the scenic romance of travel and exploration, while the pupil is held closely to the scientific data of the subject. Journeys by mule-track, trail, and sledge; by rail, coach, and caravan; bicycle tours and walking tramps; cruises and coasting trips, and surveys; sojourns with strange people in far-off lands, — what tempting pasturages for the childish mind and fancy! The fact is that we are in danger in

both History and Geography work of being swamped by plenty. Our safety lies in the proper systematization and grading of our work, and in keeping it well under control by setting up clear objective points in the progressive mastery of the problems of expression.

This topic must not be left without a strong plea for greater vigilance and more productive effort in connection with the expressional side of the work in *Mathematics*. As *achieving clearness, conciseness, and connectedness in expression*, this work stands first in effectiveness. To be sure, there is no call for literary quality, feeling or fancy, trope or turn; but what a peremptory call there is for exact, succinct language, and for neat, clear-cut, well-rounded, unified form! We have here the skeleton form and sinewy strength of bare, orderly, close-knit, tight-jointed speech, as nowhere else. Yet enter the class room when a recitation in Arithmetic or Algebra or Geometry is being held; what labored, halting, fumbling, and slovenly (not to say ungrammatical) language one not infrequently hears. The teacher is bent too exclusively upon results on paper; as if the training in the power to express in words mathematical problems, processes, and results were of little account! We urge that in the Elementary and Secondary Schools much more attention should be paid to this aspect of Mathematical study, for the sake of the high value of the power to express exact

ideas in exact and ready terms, and in agreeable manner.

While such written and oral exercises, in connection with the various subjects of the curriculum, will form a considerable part—the staple, indeed—of the work in composition, there must also be periodical work of a more personal and independent kind, allowing large scope for the individuality of the pupil. It is a great mistake, we think, to recommend as the be-all of work in composition, that “children should write about what they have learned, so that composition shall be the completion of the recitation.” Let us, from time to time, and increasingly as the child advances, get him to try to organize personal material which has never been organized for him in book or talk: let him select and reject, recast and proportion, details of purely personal significance. This work means such a schooling of spontaneity and individuality, and such a call upon creative activity, as cannot be achieved when the material upon which the child draws (as in History or Geography) has already passed through another mind, has been sorted and sifted, arranged and interpreted before it reaches him. We must be sure, of course, that the child has material, and above all, that we avoid leading him on into anything that approaches adult introspection. He must be objective. He must write about things seen, rather than felt. He must be a child, and talk as a child.

Then the letter, as we have already suggested, is an excellent form to use continuously, in order to call out naturally and easily the personal qualities of the writer. The young child, looking to its probable future, may well be excused for asking sometimes, "What's the use of learning to write a theme or essay?" But the letter is going, he knows, to play a part in his life. It is an indispensable agency of civilization. The letter, then, in all its forms, discharging all the purposes which it discharges in social life, he feels prompted to learn to write,—formal letters of invitation and acceptance; of appointment and response; of congratulation and sympathy; of challenge and reply; of official communication with Post Office, Department of Health, etc.; letters he may write for his mother to tradesmen and stores, ordering and countermanding orders,—all these as well as informal, friendly letters to parent and teacher, to friends near and distant, to relatives, and associates in all kinds of undertakings, he may be encouraged to write. Let him have plenty of good, savory models. Develop, if possible, a pride of neatness and attractive form (eschewing the modish puzzle arrangement of matter so common among us); an ambition to make his more familiar letters so pleasant to see, and so interesting and individual, that the recipient shall wish to re-read them and keep them. Let them show the bold, legible hand, the

even and ample margin, the symmetrical arrangement.

But besides the work that grows out of the various studies, and letter-writing as a means of personal expression, there is yet another kind of composition that is equally important; that, namely, which grows out of literary study, and calls upon the more purely literary and poetic inventiveness and constructiveness of the child. This is the counterpart of the work that is being done in the reading, especially of the ballad and short story. The attempt made, in the interests of appreciation, to bring home to the child a feeling for the convincing and felicitous progression, climax, surprise, and unity of the masterpieces of balladry and fiction, and gradually to give him an insight into the simpler principles of construction, — beginning, middle, and end; introduction, development, and conclusion; setting and character-grouping; the plot-weaving, in short, that has such fascination for children, — this must have its outcome in the child's own effort to invent and create, and to master the joinery of the story-teller's craft. There must be moderation here; no getting on the tiptoe of false and fussy ambition; but an enveloping atmosphere of simplicity and modesty. Too often we have seen teacher and class run away with into the tangles and briers of long-windedness, inflation, and sentimentality. Any affectation will be a blight upon such work, — as indeed it will be upon any kind of work.

The beginnings may be simple enough. It may be a short — brevity is a *sine quâ non* — variant upon some pithy story read, say, "What the Moon saw in our street — or in the park — last night." Or it may be the treatment of a situation — pathetic or humorous, or (once in a while) tragic — announced by the teacher, with the specific purpose of illustrating some one feature of story-telling, say suspense or surprise, disentanglement, or reversal. A random title or two will illustrate: "Maggie receives a strange-looking package on Christmas Eve"; "What lazy Annie found in her stocking on Christmas morning"; "Johnny gets adrift in a boat on the Sound without any oars" (invent the explaining circumstances; effect an unexpected rescue); "Eric gets locked in the pantry"; "A party of boys and girls are lost in an Adirondack forest." Or the teacher may ask for the completion of an anecdote beyond the point at which she stops short in reading it — such anecdotes as are copiously sprinkled through the newspapers and weekly and monthly serials. (The writer would emphasize the importance of the newspaper as part of the English teacher's equipment.)

Not infrequently children, should they happen to number among them any with a decided literary gift, will carry further this inventive work on their own account. The short play will be written and acted; the little magazine will even be attempted. The

teacher may often wisely and delicately guide such efforts, or at least safeguard them.

And then there is versification as the outgrowth of the study of poetry. Any impulse toward verse-making set in motion in the lower Grammar Grades by the study and recitation of poetry, may be judiciously encouraged and developed as circumstances favor. There are pitfalls. The teacher is the main factor in the situation. *If she is weak on her feet, let her not try a measure with her children.* If she lacks humor, and if she cannot sense the distinction between doggerel and sing-song, sentiment and sentimentality, again let her keep off the grass of Parnassus. In the upper Grammar Grades verse-making might, we think, be systematically undertaken; and it has in some cases, we believe, been so undertaken. We speak cautiously, because we have but little experience upon which to draw,—our own work having been done in the High School, as to which we shall speak in detail later on. But if the right point of view be taken, and the proper craftsmanlike spirit envelop the work, nothing but good should come out of an attempt to find expression in metre and rhyme. It develops ingenuity in the handling of words, sets on a quest for synonyms, sharpens the ear to sounds, and kindles the feeling for word-color and word-tone. The tendency to sing-song is natural to many children; and that it may issue in interesting results when taken in time, the work

done by Professor Farnsworth of the Teachers College, as an adjunct of work in musical composition, may be cited to show. The composition of a class-song and of a few (yes, a few only) simple memorial verses for special occasions, — school festivals and class celebrations, — and, as individual, voluntary work, rhymes for birthday cards and Christmas cards for parents and friends; — here are the natural beginnings. The outline of our *High School* course, where we have had to proceed *ab initio*, may suggest other systematic beginnings in the Elementary School. We must again refer forward to that.

We must allude also to another kind of exercise in written work that may be of signal value in the Grammar Grades; that is, translation from a foreign tongue. So great may be the service of the study of a foreign tongue as an aid to English work (in the Grammar Grades, — not earlier, we think), that we are advocates of including it in our course of study on this ground alone. However, a foreign language is so seldom introduced into our public Elementary Schools, at any rate introduced early enough to yield results in translation that will be available for treatment as part of the systematic work in composition, that we leave this topic also to be dealt with in connection with the *High School* course.

And now we have almost concluded this division of our topic — kinds of composition work growing

out of school studies and interests. It remains only to speak of the miscellaneous drill work that must accompany the writing we have suggested. First, there is the paraphrase, which may be required in moderation, chiefly to test an understanding of a passage. Exact reproduction, except in answers to questions, where the pupil is asked to satisfy us as to his knowledge, will seldom be called for; but there is much value in condensation or reduction, — the condensed narrative and argument, — in amplification, in the summary, and in the exercise in synonyms and obversions recommended by Professor Bain. The practical uses of the summary and of condensation in various degrees, beginning with the abbreviated headline, may be enforced by using the newspaper freely, and the summaries (often so excellent) given in weeklies like the *Outlook* and the *Independent*, from which sets of working models may be gathered. The children should sometimes be asked to glean them; and should sometimes be given suitable clippings to reduce both by making cuts and by genuine condensation. The preparation of the telegram, reduced from the letter, or otherwise, is another way of practising verbal economy.

Amplification may take the form of an enlargement or illustration of proverb and fable, or of a topic sentence, newspaper caption, telegram, or (with caution) a metaphor.

To give reality and immediacy to the work in

Composition, and to make it socially serviceable, we should continue to keep in view that it is in most cases to be undertaken with the idea of being used in helpful and interesting ways in the class or in the school. It has been written with the prospect of its being heard and enjoyed, either in class room or general assembly or elsewhere, or is offered as a personal contribution to a class symposium. In the case of certain kinds of composition that should have literary quality, the class is for the time being a literary society, met to derive profit and pleasure from the best efforts of its members: efforts that ought, therefore, to be as personal and distinctive as possible, — now a scene or place visited, a person met, a celebration attended, a procession viewed, an article (a boat or bookcase or work-basket) made, a ramble of observation, an experiment tried, a boating or fishing excursion, a game played, a match won; — something which tempts the child to tell spiritedly, as he might excitedly narrate it to parent or friend, things seen and heard and done — yes, and by *him* or *her*, with a particular pair of eyes and ears.

The debate, too, must have place in the higher Grammar Grades. As debatable questions arise, arguments must be thought out, outlines made, and briefs prepared. Of course not all the written work can be read aloud; but some of it will be; and all of it will be read by the teacher. The child must feel

that it has not been written in vain; it has been appraised by the teacher at *any rate*. *And the teacher's commendation is, perhaps, the chief prize to be won.* The children must appreciate that; it must be the greatest inducement to take pains.

And let us, before summing up what we have said and passing on to points of method, revert to the question of form. The sense of literary form ought, we have urged, to be assiduously cultivated, and may be reënforced by the cultivation of significant form in the arrangement of the page. We do not mean so much the writing, neat erasure, and the like; and we have not in mind a profusion of red ruling and flamboyant decoration. These defeat the end we have in view, — a clear, diagrammatic appeal to the eye. We refer to the spacing and arrangement of matter. Let headings be bold and well isolated. Let indentations be obvious. Let margins be carefully kept, — a small quarter-inch margin on the right of the page, and the inch margin on the left, as well as a good half-inch at the foot. Children are often lax about this bottom margin, which is essential to comeliness.

And, speaking of the headings, the teacher is advised to insist, as part of this aim of aiding the reader by making the page as telltale as possible of its contents, that every piece of written work, every separate exercise, outline, and note-book entry, shall have its concise yet accurately descriptive heading.

This is an excellent mental exercise, and it makes the student realize the exact nature of his task. We should disallow such vague headings as merely "English," "Literature," "Composition," or the title of the book or poem to which the work relates. These, if used, *should be supplemented by such sub-headings* as will give to an outsider a fair idea of the nature of the task upon which the pupil is engaged.¹ Sometimes it is well, in longer compositions or exercises, to call for sectional or paragraph headings, corresponding with the outlines, to indicate the chief sub-topics dealt with; and it may pleasantly vary procedure if the pupils employ sometimes the side or marginal heading, perhaps writing it in red ink for emphasis' sake.

By all this we may seem to be making much of the mere mechanics of writing. We have learned that these matters amount to more than mechanism. We have been able now and again to enlist a pupil's artistic sense of outward form in the interests of a deeper mental formalism; and his pride in the attractive appearance of his work, in behalf of a desire to make the work itself in its substance worthy of equal approval. Correlations of the English work with the Art work may be made with great profit to both subjects, especially in the High School course. In this, as in other circumstances, the wise teacher

¹ We have ourselves introduced into our List of Signs used in correction, a large 'H,' meaning "insufficient or faulty heading."

will use the elect of her class to educate the rest. On an indispensable burlap-covered board, upon which notices, models, and diagrams for reference, etc., are pinned, he will display and refer commendingly to exemplary pieces of work handed in to him. Such little daily exhibits, the writer has found, enlist widespread interest, and are a stimulus to the class.

And now for a summary of all these matters. Our leading points are these:—

(1) Composition — which we shall refer to as such only rarely — is to be regarded as the expressional side of the child's work in the commonest medium of daily use, language. The child should be regarded as "composing," or putting his thoughts into the form in which they may most readily be grasped, whenever he says or writes anything, whether it be in short spoken sentences, or in the lengthy written essay. It is, therefore, a process involved in every study he is engaged upon, not a thing apart. {

(2) The highest purpose that can be served in the attempt to master the means of verbal expression, is effective self-command through self-objectification and self-communication; by which we mean such a command of one's impulses and ideas and stock of knowledge as is evidenced by one's power to give them rational form in language.

(3) From the intellectual point of view this power of "composed" utterance is at once a means and a test

of mental organization; and the task of the teacher in teaching "composition" is best described as that of aiding the student to organize, through and for ready communication, the content of his own knowledge and thought, feeling and imagination.

(4) The child from the first is called upon to organize these materials, according to the different kinds of work done in his class, in all the varieties of form which Rhetoric recognizes; in the narrative (as in History), in description (as in Geography, etc.), in exposition and explanation (History, Arithmetic, etc.), in argument (in the same), and in persuasion (the debate). The simplest and most interesting form, and that which reveals best the root principles of organization, is Narration. Earliest emphasis falls therefore on Narration.

(5) Hence, to teach Composition means to lead the child gradually from the intuitive and unconscious practice of the simplest forms of discourse, to the conscious, ingenious mastery of the most elaborate and difficult forms; which he may be called upon either to use himself, or to apprehend and appreciate when used by others, especially the great masterpieces of literature.

(6) The means that further this end are (a) the orderly or well-organized presentation of all knowledge in all studies of the curriculum in the first instance, (b) the promotion of a habit of orderly ex-

pression of what has been impressed; and the cultivation of a sense of form, which will be helped by (c) the sympathetic, vital study of literary models, especially those that are structurally flawless; short stories and ballads, which exhibit plot most obviously, being particularly helpful to the beginner.

(7) But, besides the varied written and oral work called for in connection with the subjects of study, opportunity must be found for

(a) Expressions of the more personal side of the child's nature (the letter being freely written with this end in view), and the organization of the materials of personal experience that, unlike the matter of his studies, have not passed through the alembic of another's mind, either in book or by talk; and

(b) Expressions of the child's inventiveness and constructiveness in story-telling, as an outcome of the reading and studying of the masterpieces of narrative literature, — the short story and ballad and shorter epic.

(c) Versification (in the upper Grammar Grades, at any rate), class songs and memorial songs being the most common forms of practice.

(d) Translations from a foreign tongue, where the student has advanced far enough.

(e) Miscellaneous drill exercises in connection with the fore-mentioned kinds of work: Paraphrase and Reproduction (of certain kinds only); Condensation

and Reduction; the Summary and Outline; Exercises in Synonyms and Obversions; Amplification and Illustration.

(8) Composition work should be made to seem to the child as worth while; as having, therefore, a definite, immediate object: it is either to test (in the written as in the oral recitation) his knowledge, his understanding and appreciation, his power to repeat an experience or to meet a predicted emergency; to give pleasure to others, to defend himself, to support and enforce his views, to persuade alike friend and foe. Yet sometimes the pupil must simply do what he is told, without knowing why.

And now as to some of the details of method. What particular difficulties are met with by the teacher? They are chiefly, (1) the child's lack of matter, (2) his tendency to ramble, (3) his involved, confused, wordy way of saying things.

(1) It is common not to ask the child to write upon any topic upon which he has nothing to say. But we must be careful to distinguish between ignorance and unreadiness. The only cure for ignorance is information. The cure for unreadiness is discussion, — the gentle probe or stimulating suggestion, to stir the mind, to start the process of self-exploration, to quicken the memory. In the lower grades a certain amount of preparatory work will,

as a rule, be necessary; not often in the written recitation, if the questions are skilfully put, but very frequently in original, inventive, imaginative work. It will be well, after announcing the topic or the group of topics from which one is to be chosen, to talk it over; sometimes to strike a key-note; to suggest, or to get the pupils to suggest, the sources in experience or reality upon which they may draw; to throw up the subject in two or three possible ways of regarding it; to put the proper atmosphere about it. If well done, this will serve to whet the ambition, and evoke an eagerness to write about it; for the pupils have delightedly discovered that there is a good deal that might be said; that they have something personal and peculiar to communicate, or some unsuspected way of treatment.

(2) But the more there is to say, the greater the tendency to ramble. Sometimes (as we have already advised) the child should be allowed to ramble; better that than standing still. But it often happens that the discursive habit is actually encouraged by asking the child to write upon a topic which allows of little else,—the vague, general topic, such as that Life of Washington we have asked to have told in two hundred words. We must be careful first, then, about our subject. It must be framed in such a way as to aid the child to set limits to its excursion. It is only recently that the importance of a wise delimi-

tation of the topic has had our attention. The treatment of the subject in Scott and Denny's "Paragraph Writing," or Lewis's "First Lessons in Writing English," is a comparatively new thing. The matter is one which should be most carefully studied by the teacher; it is even more important in Elementary than in Secondary school work. Children should be encouraged to limit their own topics. The teacher may announce a general subject, and ask the class to write upon some special aspect of it, after submitting the special limited title for the teacher's approval. It must be added, by way of caution, that a generous interpretation of relevancy must be allowed. Narrow a topic too rigorously, and the child will not have anything to say about it.

To this first condition of checking rambling, we must also add a second, about which a good deal has already been said here, — the use of an outline to control the writer. We need add nothing to what we said in Chapter VIII, except to advise the teacher to get her pupils to form, before beginning to write, and to hold in the mind while writing, a simple outline or scheme of treatment. Here, too, a word of caution; we must beware of over-emphasizing the mechanism of the work. On no account must we endanger spontaneity. Better a discursive fluency, a flood of chatter, than timid sterility, or a paralyzing caution and hesitancy. Very tenderly must the voluble child be dealt with. Fluency

is a good thing to start with: it may be gradually controlled; but if there is nothing to control, the case is indeed a more difficult one.

(3) So too with wordiness, diffuseness; it must gradually clear itself. Just as we err in demanding too insistently that a child shall keep to the point, we err also in pressing insistently for brevity and for precision in the use of words. To be clear, is as gradual and as difficult an accomplishment as to be pertinent. Many of us full-grown folk never attain to either. For this reason we warn against the danger of too strict a demand for clearness. To be clear — that, say some, is the one thing that can be safely exacted and attained. “Habitual clearness can be taught,” says Professor Barrett Wendell; “individual traits of force and elegance can only be sympathetically encouraged.” “Hence,” he continues, “the natural limits of the intelligent teaching of English Composition begin to appear. Those teachers work best who aim to direct their pupils towards habitual clearness in the choice of words, and in the use of the principles of Composition.” (“Monograph,” p. 74.) Yes, only we must be cautious. Clearness emerges very gradually out of the mist of the vague, general conceptions of childhood. Moreover, it is important to distinguish the occasions when clearness may legitimately be striven for. We must remember that the child is given to the use of poetic, figurative, alliterative, onomatopoeic language; language that, using Arnold’s phrase-

ology, is "thrown out" at an object or idea, that is often literary in the best sense, because suggestive. There are times, of course, when such language is out of keeping; but where this gift of literary expressiveness is found, it must be tenderly dealt with. We know that teachers are only too prone, for "clearness" sake, to change into a flat, commonplace, and narrow accuracy the free language that has a generous literary sweep. The speech of childhood is full of literary surprises, which, while they may not pass muster under text-book rule, are to be more than tolerated on the score of their fresh and savory quality of rich connotation. Teachers must bring to the literary work of children a breath of tolerance, a tact that is bred of sympathy with their vague strivings and subtle intentions; which alone can tell them when to insist on precision, and when to admit a reaching-out after the bolder effects of suggestive speech, — speech that is to be gauged not by scientific, but by poetic standards.

We have already passed, by natural transition, to the subject of correction. Again let it be urged, as the principle of prime importance, that not every mistake is to be corrected. We must correct first those mistakes with which we are systematically coping in our language work, and those with which the children have systematically grappled in their earlier work, — this on the supposition that the course of study provides for a progressive treatment of specific difficulties in each

grade. It is a good practice, when a new difficulty is attacked, to ask the children to go over some of their old work correcting mistakes of the kind now being considered. This puts them in the proper attitude toward the work of correction, and makes for that habit of self-correction which we must foster by every means at our command.

One way of doing this is to take for class discussion certain typical mistakes running through a batch of papers; to give a few special exercises on this common error; and then to hand round the papers of the batch for class correction, expecting that the class will discuss the errors, and correct them neatly in the margin as the teacher would do.

The duty of wise and impartial correction must not hide from us the duty and efficacy of commendation. The good things, the happy hits, the felicitous word or phrase (the use of a new word as an addition to the working vocabulary of the class), the taking conceit, the rhythmical sentence, the ingenious plan, the expressive effect in alliteration or onomatopœia, — these should be brought casually before the class and noted, with only a silent but meaningful recognition of the little workman whose work is being published. Occasionally the class may be asked to choose from a batch of selected compositions read by the teacher, the one that is the most interesting, that it may be read at the morning exercise of the school. The readiness to

appreciate, unselfishly and disinterestedly, the good work of classmates and coöperators can scarcely be too assiduously cultivated

Finally, as we advance in the grades we must make the model play a greater and greater part. Sometimes before and sometimes after a task is assigned, the teacher may say, "Now, let us see how a great master does the sort of thing we are trying to do in our 'prentice way." Or she may take a model of her own workmanship, — a model (it may sometimes be) which she has elaborated on the basis of the best examples handed in to her; a model, that is, which embodies her divination of the sort of ideal that the young, baffled craftsmen she is training had vaguely in their minds, and were trying to approximate.

CHAPTER XII

GRAMMAR AND LANGUAGE WORK IN THE GRAMMAR GRADES

AMONG the greater unsettled questions connected with the study of English, none is more unsettled than the Grammar question. What place shall the study of formal English Grammar have in our curriculum? Shall it come into the Grammar Grades, or await the High School? What emphasis shall be put upon it? How far shall it be carried? What language lessons shall precede it?—and so on. In the recent reaction against the old-fashioned grammar grind, opinion has swerved to the extreme of excluding formal Grammar altogether from the Elementary School, and of ranking it as a High School study. This view still widely obtains; it is that, *e.g.*, of Professor Carpenter, expressed in his recent “Principles of English Grammar.” It is also that of the Committee of Ten, who hold that formal Grammar should not be taken up earlier than the thirteenth year; and that even then it should “not be pursued as a separate study longer than is necessary to familiarize the pupil with the main principles. Probably a single year (not more than three hours a week) will be sufficient.” Moreover, the teaching of it “should

be as far as possible inculcated, and should be brought into close relation with the pupil's work in reading and composition."

On the whole, however, the present later trend of opinion rather favors the study of it in some form or other in the upper Grammar Grades. The tendency toward a recognition of the necessity of Grammar in the Elementary Grades is indirectly borne out by the elaboration of a substitute for the Grammar text-book in the form of the language lesson, which tends more and more to assume the character of nothing less than a new type of formal Grammar itself, — developed, it is true, in connection with the theory and practice of composition, but none the less Grammar on that account. On the completion of any of the typical series of language lessons recently published, the child is already in possession of all the leading principles of formal Grammar.

Reviewing briefly the salient arguments of the discussion, which will explain the present status of the subject, let us first ask, What was the meaning of the reaction against the study of formal Grammar of the Lindley Murray type? The main count against it was that it failed of practical results; failed as a communicable "art of speaking and writing the English language with propriety," — to quote the Murray definition. The endless formalities of rule and precept were found to be wasteful burdens of knowledge unrelated to practice.

Valueless as an aid to the art of writing, what could be said of it as a science revealing the structure and growth of language and the logic of speech? Sir Joshua Fitch, to whose paragraphs in his "Lectures on Teaching" we might refer as summarizing the main points of the discussion, puts the points thus: "In Latin forms you find this [logic of language], in so far only as it finds expression in the inflections and forms of words, expressed with some fitness and scientific accuracy. In English it is expressed in an unscientific and very incomplete way;"—in short, "of pure grammar there is very little in the English language."¹

And Mrs. Jacobi puts it still more emphatically: "English Grammar is atrophied, and as unsuitable as a field wherein to learn the principles of Grammar, as the hoof of a horse would be as a model for the study of the feet."² Such a view has gained in pertinence through the growing recognition by modern scholarship of the unscientific character of the English Grammars in use heretofore, based as they were on the model of the Latin Grammars of the Renaissance type, and, from the outlook of modern philology, false to the facts of the English language. It is now obvious enough that, understanding the word "grammar" somewhat narrowly, as implying such a logical and consistent inflectional and syntactical sys-

¹ "Lectures on Teaching," pp. 241-242

² "Primary Education," p. 96.

tem as Latin presents, the English language is a very poor language indeed for teaching grammar.

And yet it is so easy to prove too much against the old views and practices. With all its follies, the discredited Grammar drill did accomplish some good results, even though at a ridiculously high cost. At least it burned indelibly into the student's mind the fact that there is a right and wrong in the use of one's native tongue; and that it is a vital and fundamental part of good manners to be canonical in grammatical usage. It did help the formation of a sort of linguistic conscience and linguistic pride; a punctiliousness—ay, sometimes a pedantry—of grammatical observance. Who has not known many an old-fashioned purist—a vanishing type—who delighted in the fine distinctions of the grammarians and in a scrupulous etiquette of speech that had its worth and charm? And all the weary, dreary parsing—to the murdering of many a dissected classic—did do something toward the promotion of a sense of the logic of speech and of a strict habit of mental analysis. To analyze and parse was in some degree to think, to judge, to reason.

Again, soberer second thought says that because English is a comparatively grammarless tongue, it by no means follows that the formal study of it is so much less worth while than that of Latin or German, and may not yield very good results. Its very anom-

alies and its composite character give it compensating advantages as a subject of study,—advantages vigorously championed by Professor F. C. Woodward in his monograph on “English in the Schools” (Heath), wherein he takes the stand that “English asks no odds of the classics, even in a comparison of respective disciplinary values.” Meagre as is its accidence,—so, in brief, his argument runs,—it has nevertheless enough inflection, enforcing distinctions of case, number, person, tense, and mood, to illustrate and apply the use of forms and to carry home general principles, while it is not overloaded with them. This meagreness is a positive advantage, as the mind is not bewildered nor the memory burdened with a great diversity of forms. All the vital grammatical principles are exemplified on a small scale; and at the same time a somewhat rude inflectional method of establishing relations between words is replaced by a much more thought-evoking method of establishing logical relations by phrasal combinations and by the order of words. In other terms, the mind is freed from attention to the linguistic detail and machinery which is such a clog upon the student’s progress: it is forced to grapple with the genuine logic of speech. Reason replaces memory; thought-evidence, the sense-evidence of inflection. In fine, the construction and comprehension of the English sentence does not throw the mind back on concords

and rules, on endless paradigms and exceptions, but on genuine thought-relations. Hence its superior disciplinary value, save in the matter of mere memorizing. Hence, too, its greater flexibility and variety, adaptability and resourcefulness, as compared with highly inflected tongues. There is much force in all this; and the arguments strengthen our contention that the teaching of English Grammar must necessarily be a vital factor in the teaching of English as a whole.

Although much more than we can say here is to be said *pro* and *con* in the debate, we shall cut a long matter short by stating summarily the main conclusions to which, seemingly, most of us are being led:—

(1) We have finally abandoned the old view, which regarded Grammar as the art of correct speaking and writing, in favor of the view that Grammar is the science underlying that art,—a knowledge of which aids the art, and is involved in the conscious elaboration of its principles and technique. An art, however, is taught by practice; and the main pedagogical factor in it is imitation.

(2) We are freeing ourselves from the tyranny of Latin models, and are substituting a Grammar that deals simply with the actual facts of the English tongue, and recognizes how widely it differs from a highly inflected tongue like Latin.

(3) We have come to recognize the necessity of

following a different method, for insuring a conscious mastery of our native tongue, from that employed in mastering a foreign tongue. In the one case the method must be mainly inductive and analytic; in the other, mainly deductive and synthetic. In the one case we are systematizing and rationalizing the data in our possession; in the other, using the rules that are the outcome of systematization, as short cuts to the facts.

We may now pass to a detailed statement of the kind of grammar work that should be undertaken in the school course. The major premises of our position are that the study of formal Grammar is from the start a necessary part of the study of English, because the work in Composition and Literature cannot properly be done without it. In connection with that work, grammatical distinctions must very early be made, and a grammatical nomenclature prove indispensable; while grammatical analysis, syntax, is involved in thought-analysis.* These distinctions and this terminology and analysis must be made and used as they become necessary. And when the main facts and principles of Grammar have in the course of time been accumulated, the whole may be reviewed as a separate matter, with amplifications by the aid of a text-book of English Grammar.

There is no apocalyptic moment when the child emerges into the sphere of grammatical consciousness.

He begins to be a grammarian just as soon as he begins to deal with language in a reflective, analytical manner. It is not when he is first ushered with uncouth ceremoniousness into this world of formal Grammar by such solemnizing facts as that all Grammar, like all Gaul, is divided into so many equal parts, and that Grammar deals with words, which in turn are made up of letters, of which there are twenty-four in the English language, and so on,—not when these august facts are laid before him that he begins to grapple with Grammar: it is when he comes to recognize and talk about a sentence and the convenient artifice of beginning it with a capital and closing it with a period; when he is learning to capitalize proper names or nouns, and to divide a series of nouns by commas; when he tries to clear up a puzzling passage in his reading by straightening out an inversion, or attaching a modifying phrase or clause to the word of which it is the proper adjunct,—it is then that he reaches it inductively.

This reflective, analytical knowledge of the mother-tongue is being built up—not as a separate subject, labelled Grammar, but as a factor in writing and reading, as the child proceeds to the use and knowledge of the more complex forms of speech. It proceeds *pari passu* with the development of more complex ways of thinking. The child thinks first in short, simple affirmations, expressed in short, simple sentences. Then he begins to tuck away one short sentence into the cor-

ner of another in the form of a modifier or a phrase. As a stripling he will say : "The boy had no hat on his head. He was running down the street. He was a red-headed boy ;" but in time will pack away his observations in a single sentence : "A red-headed boy ran down the street without any hat on." Should he meet such a sentiment in rhyme, say, —

No hat on his red head,
In haste the urchin sped
Down the street,

his comprehension of the lines would involve the grammatical fact that the hatless red head belonged to or was an "adjunct" of the hasty urchin.

Much, then, as without a definite text-book study of Physiography, the child's conception of the world about him is being built up into an orderly whole ; so, with the gradual accumulation of grammatical facts and rules in connection with his Composition and Literature, a science of Grammar and its cousin, Logic, is elaborating itself in his mind. By and by these facts will be detached from their surroundings and presented in separate systematized form, with new interesting lights thrown on them from their history. They will be studied then, not to meet practical needs, but as involving the science of thought,—in short, as explicit logic ; as a means of strengthening his modes of thinking ; involving a habit of analyzing carefully the language he uses through "the unconscious analysis of his own thinking."

Nor will the wise teacher fail to kindle gradually an interest in words, their life, their composition, their varying color of connotation, until the moment arrives when, with a sufficient store of such facts accumulated, the anatomy and physiology—or better, the natural history of words—becomes also a fascination. This will quicken in the student a sense of the life there is in language, which will make of his reading of Shakespeare and the Bible and Bunyan and Malory, perhaps, a double pleasure. Changing the figure to that employed by Emerson, language will become to him “fossil poetry”; and he will find its stratifications more interesting than those of the rocks, because they are purple-veined with human passion, golden-gleaming with the ore of human thought and fancy. To speak from personal experience, if the interest in the story of words has been occasionally fed in earlier years (and how it can be so fed is well suggested by Mrs. Spalding in her chapter on Word-Collecting¹), the moment will come in the High School when such a book as Trench’s “Study of Words” (out of date, doubtless; but without a modern substitute) will exercise a wonder-working spell over the student. He has become an amateur of words.

The view we have been advancing accords satisfactorily with that taken by Professor Earle in his “Simple Grammar of English Now in Use” (Putnam’s),—a

¹ “The Problem of Elementary Composition,” p. 27.

book that makes a long stride toward the de-Latinizing of the grammar of English. Here he says: "The leading of Nature teaches us that grammatical study should begin at the point where the use of speech is consciously apprehended by the young, . . . should begin with language, not as a fabric, but as the representation of thought" (Preface). As we have insisted in an earlier chapter, the teacher must be careful not to force this conscious apprehension. Her first care must be to establish habits; she must not embarrass the child by breaking in upon these habits with reflection until they have been firmly fixed. The moment will announce itself unmistakably enough when the student will find custom an insufficient guide in the use of speech and in its interpretation. He will no longer be at the mercy of a poor empiricism: he calls for reasons, and seeks the support of rules. Why shall he not say, "He or I are going," or "No one but she and I were present"? What will guide him toward correct practice? So, too, in his reading matter, he meets with difficulties, — inversions, tangled phrase and clause, — which he must solve by no mere rule of thumb, but by rules which he can apply again. He must have a terminology, involving classification of types of construction and their parts, and classification of words according to their functions. Foreign plurals bother him, and what not. We have no choice but to make a grammarian out of him.

But this grammatical work, done incidentally as a

condition of sure, masterful advance in speaking and writing, which involves a conquest of many matters besides formal grammar, must be done systematically and thoroughly, if it is to be well done. The Language Lesson book is an attempt to accomplish this; and what it stands for, — namely, an orderly method of surmounting the difficulties of the English language, — we must have, whether we use a text-book or no. Let us consider what such a method should be.

We have already indicated some criticisms that must be passed upon the common type of Language Lesson books. The chief of these is that they attempt the unnecessary, and insult the child's intelligence by trivial and uninteresting exercises. This is due largely to the fact that these language lessons are too much isolated from other work, the form being wholly disengaged from substance. Language is treated as a thing entirely apart, and not as a vehicle of expression called into play in the effort to impart or reproduce information, thought, fancy. Some — indeed not a little — isolation and some routine practice work are unavoidable; but this should have its obvious relation, for the child's mind, to the needs developed in the course of his work. For example, the rule about capitalizing proper names will grow out of the writing by the child of his own name on his papers for the purpose of identification; and so with capitalizing and abbreviating dates, places, titles, and other "proper names." The rules

as to capitalizing and indenting lines of poetry will emerge when the child copies for preservation a verse or two dictated by his teacher. The discrimination of an adjective as a part of speech will come when, in the course of attempts to describe an animal or flower that is being studied, the teacher has to suggest that a better modifying or characterizing word may be found. These rules are not to stand in the child's mind as book-created, book-enforced things; but as reasonable conventions of ordinary practice, called for in orderly, careful work. But let them be *rules*,—rules carefully framed and thoroughly mastered; and let there be enough routine practice upon them to drive them home. This is where a text-book may be called in as a useful adjunct, saving the teacher much work in setting exercises. For our part, we would use a text-book in no other way. It will provide (1) practice work, and (2) a reference book of rules, for the recollection and observance of which the child is held responsible.

The main problem of the language lesson, thus understood as connected with and growing out of the child's work generally, is to formulate the steps by which the child may be expected to advance along the lines of study marked out for him. We regard this as of first importance. These steps should be so clearly marked out that the teacher of each grade may know by what stages the child has advanced, and what definite new steps forward she is expected to take, as

also to what further advances in the higher grades they are precursory. Her children come to her with certain definite things learned, certain rules mastered and habits formed; and she has in turn to send them forward to the next grade with certain new conquests.

Let it here be added that in order that this work may be thoroughly and cleanly done, there must be frequent review and summary. Especially at the beginning of the year should there be a review of the field already covered, — never, however, in bald prefatory fashion, because it is important that the children should get the sense, with each promotion, of a new departure, an entrance upon a new unknown territory that tempts to exploration. There are, indeed, few powers that are so serviceable in a teacher as that of knowing how to review deftly and tactfully, and sometimes disguisedly, by ringing new changes out of old material, by turning new lights on familiar objects, by aiding the child to discover how old acquisitions may turn the key to the gates of new realms.

And let us repeat here that this method also implies that the teacher will allow to go uncorrected by any systematic or delaying treatment (save by the force of correct example through the rapid substitution of the correct for the incorrect expression) any of the faults that are to meet with such treatment later on in the course.

To come now to suggestions as to the actual steps

to be taken, we do not shirk the responsibility of outlining a scheme when we insist, to start with, that there can be no one scheme to fit all cases; the reasons being that there is no one fixed and classic type of the child's mind, so far as linguistic power is concerned, no uniform average of linguistic cultivation to be reckoned upon. The linguistic aptitudes of children vary perplexingly, and local conditions—especially in those Babels, our large American cities—are strikingly variable. More important still, the talents and leanings of the teacher will vary unaccountably. We are obliged to say, using and adapting Ruskin's words, that any fairly good scheme, and sometimes even a positively bad one, will fare well in the hands of a good teacher; while the best of schemes will be wrecked in the hands of an incompetent one. The requirement is that there shall be a scheme of some sort; and there are many to choose from. The well-equipped teacher should be well acquainted with the best; there is not one but has some specially strong feature.¹

¹ The following may be specifically mentioned: Arnold and Kirtledge's "Mother Tongue," 2 Books (Ginn); De Garmo's "Language Lesson Series" (Werner Co.); Gow's "Method of English" (Macmillan); Hyde's "Lessons in English," 2 Books (Heath); McMurry's "Course of Study and Special Method in Reading and Literature" (Public School Publishing Co.); Reed and Kellogg's "Complete Course of Study in Language" (Maynard, Merrill & Co.); Woodward's "English in the Schools"; Various Courses of Study,—Horace Mann School, Public Schools of New York, Brooklyn, Indianapolis, Chicago, Connecticut, etc. Reports of the Committees of Ten, Fifteen, and Twelve.

Nevertheless, as we are called upon here, we suppose, for something that should aspire to be a Counsel of Perfection, we shall attempt a type scheme that may serve as prolegomenon to future systems. It will be found following this chapter, closing our treatment of English in the Elementary Schools. It is based on certain fundamental principles. The first and foremost of these is that which demands that we proceed from the general to the particular; from the large, broad outlines of things to their detail. The child's mind grows in the main (though not entirely) from mass to detail, from general impression to closer and narrowing glimpse. The cursory glance, the wide, vague sweep of vision, gives way to the more scrutinizing gaze upon a more definitely limited field of vision. In English work it is always the same wide territory, the same varied landscape, that is stretched before us; but we scan and rescan it in selected sections with changing purpose and altered focus. Always the same prominent features meet us as we survey it in its full expanse, — Words, Punctuation Marks, Sentences, Paragraphs, Chapters, Stanzas, — these are from first to last its landmarks. We shall, therefore, condemn that method which lingers long at the outset on one feature, which tries to train the eye too nicely upon it. This is a frequent fault of the Language Lesson books. One gives tiresomely minute treatment of the sentence in all its kinds; or of the subject and predicate in their many

varieties of form. Another begins with all the minutiae of Nouns before the large facts are taken into view. Yet another puts the study of prefixes and suffixes out of perspective. Worse still, some try to do many things at once.

If the language work we have suggested in our scheme has been covered in the earlier grades, the study of formal Grammar in the highest Grammar Grade will not be very much more than the orderly, systematized presentation of the facts and principles already gathered. There will be some duplication; and a fuller explanation of some facts in the light of the history of English speech; while the finer logic implicit in Grammar, will be made more explicit. But we must follow, as the first principle that should govern the study of Grammar, this: that it should deal only with those phenomena of speech which are familiar to the pupil. It is generally a mistake to drag in unfamiliar words and idioms, literary conventions, poetic licenses, survivals, etc., whose usage a child is not conversant with, but must know before he can appreciate the purpose of their citation. "I bought me a hat;" "Did you see that crew of excursionists?" — such significant localisms and colloquialisms may be used to good effect in our study; and we may draw many simple and interesting philological data from the earlier works read — old ballads, dialect poems and pieces, and the Bible, if it should have been read. The peculiarities of Shake-

spere's English we would leave until our pupils know something of Shakespeare.

If our study is to be for the most part inductive, this principle must perforce be observed. And that it should be inductive, it is hardly necessary to prove. Let the child understand that he has many of the data of the science of Grammar from which the conclusions of the grammarians are drawn. We shall not begin with definitions—we shall evolve definitions. The teacher's business will be to guard against hasty conclusions; to warn the pupil when he has not all the facts material to a conclusion. The text-book will be used chiefly for suggestion and verification.

For instance, if we are going to classify nouns, we shall not begin with an enumeration of classes,—Common and Proper; Abstract and Concrete, Collective, etc. We shall take a passage that is rich in nouns, sort them, and track down the different classes of conception for which they stand; and by contrast and comparison make our discriminations. The contraposition of such words as "snow" and "white"; "sugar" and "sweetness"; "soldier" and "army" will be our aids. The difference of attitude implied is very important: in the one case the student becomes an explorer and generalizer; in the other his generalizing and too much of his exploring are done for him. In the one case he is made to discriminate his own mental processes; in the other he is asked to recognize

them after they have been discriminated for him. If the expression "laboratory method" is in order anywhere in connection with language work, it is here.

In the invention of grammatical exercises there is room for much ingenuity. The work in Grammar may nearly always be made incidental to work for other ends, of which the pupil is unaware, and should be kept unaware at the time. In the conversion of concrete nouns into abstract, and nouns into adjectives, and so on, he is at once clarifying his thought, and increasing and strengthening his vocabulary. Or he is asked to think of circumstances under which proper names, like John and Mary, may be converted into common names; and the invention of a sentence such as "There were six Marys and seven Johns present" serves at once its grammatical end, and draws upon the discriminative and the inventive resources of the student.

The text-book we shall use, then, is one that is adapted to a child of twelve or thirteen, of average intelligence and information. It will avoid the flat superfluities of the books that will allow nothing to be taken for granted. As regards those preliminary facts, already known, which are needed as a basis for a further development of the subject, either it will frankly state these facts in a convenient review or summary, or it will give them new aspect and deeper significance in the light of fresh distinctions and comparisons.

Taking as a foreground such a scheme of language work as we have outlined, the following plan of development in the separate text-book treatment is suggested:—

I. *Introductory*: English Grammar as a study of thought-relations expressed through speech by the following means:—

(a) By certain classes of words with certain specific functions (Parts of Speech).

(b) Through the varying order and influence of these words in a sentence.

(c) By certain inflections, systematized under Declension, Conjugation, etc., which allow in some cases a small amount of indifference to their order in the sentence (as in Latin, *e.g.*).

(d) To which must be added numerous idioms and anomalies of the tongue, calling for explanations through facts in the history of the language. Good Usage will be explained.

II. The parts of speech: a more exhaustive treatment of each, giving the species of each genus, and the convertible and phrasal kinds. This means considering them in given contexts.

III. The organization of the sentence. The various types. Departure from normal form (inversion) under the exigencies of emphasis, rhythm, rhyme, etc., and for the various rhetorical reasons. (Here Grammar necessarily reaches out into Rhetoric.)

IV. Relation through inflection (Accidence). Various kinds of inflection. Further treatment of Case and Gender.

V. The elementary facts as to Formation and Derivation of the English language, giving a view of the competing tongues that have gone to its formation. Phonology touched on.

Just how thorough the treatment should be will depend upon the point at which the study of formal Grammar is introduced into the course. Also we must take into consideration, as an important factor modifying our treatment of the whole subject, whether pupils know or are studying a foreign tongue. In this case, comparison and contrast will be one of the most telling methods we can employ.

Finally, the place of Grammar in the High School must, of course, depend upon what has been done in the Elementary School. If the subject has not been studied separately in the latter, then it perforce belongs in the first year of the High School; if it has, then there may either be a review, with more advanced study, in the first year of the High School, or (our own decided preference) the study may be postponed to the second or third year of the course.

OUTLINE PLAN OF LANGUAGE WORK AND GRAMMAR AND
CONNECT'ONS WITH THE WORK IN COMPOSITION

The Central idea of the Plan is the development of the sentence as thought-unit, and the treatment of words and the machinery of written expression as functional elements of the sentence. New parts of speech, new sentence-forms, and new devices are considered as they come into view with the development of mental faculty and with the need of new symbols and modes of expression to keep pace with it. The approach is always to be inductive: information, rules, etc., are to be given to meet actual developing needs arising in the process of mastering reading and writing.

First Grade or Year.

If Reading and Writing are begun, the mechanics of the simplest forms will absorb attention. The only terms to be used will be such simple ones as "spell," "word," "stop," "syllable," big and little A, B, C, etc.

Second Grade or Year.*The Sentence in its Simplest Form.*

Marks of : capital and period to indicate beginning and end of the sentence.

Other forms of capitalization as needed, viz. :

(a) Child's own name, and its substitute, "I."

(b) Child's own address, and abbreviations involved : initials.

(c) Other persons and places.

(d) Dates. Days of the week. Months.

Distinguish prose and poetry (what is singable) :
rhyme ; verse.

(e) Begin each line of poetry with a capital.

Use as a model of the self-sufficient sentence, the simple proverb and adage, and the verse of two and four lines.

Write, if progress warrants, the simplest form of letter a few times. Address an envelope to parent. Write dedication of Easter gift.

Third Grade or Year.

The Enlarged Sentence of the Simplex Class.

Comma, as a new need, chiefly to separate series of nouns, and nouns of address : **Proper** and **Common**.

Apostrophe, discriminated and used ; but no rule given : chiefly as marking singular possessive noun.

Number : **Singular** and **Plural**. [? Defer if possible.]

Quotation Marks in dialogue, as a convenience to indicate where each speaker begins and ends. Broken quotations explained.

Distinguish in Reader **paragraph** (sentence-group), **Chapter**, **Section**, **Verse**. Use terms freely in calling for copies in dictation and in original work.

Titles of books, poems, stores, railroads, etc.

Indentation is consequently called for in paragraphs, lines of verses, addresses, and parts of letters.

Margins first observed. **Capitalize** titles, proper names, etc.

The classic form of short composition (as the proverb was for Grade II) will be the one-paragraph fable or story (*Æsop*, the model), — virtually, the expanded or illustrated proverb, — short, compact, concrete. Dialogue, employing quotation marks, may be introduced.

Advance a step in letter-writing. Use note-paper

sometimes. Address envelopes. New abbreviations.

Fourth Grade or Year.

Begin analytical Treatment of the Simplex Sentence, involving a Distinction of its Parts and Marks.

Compare a sentence with a book-title, and an exclamation, to bring out leading characteristic.

In this connection begin the use of **exclamation point** and **question mark**.

Subject and **Predicate** distinguished in the course of framing simple, connected assertions about things and animals. The list of attributes tabulated in the science lesson may be thrown into short sentences and grouped into a paragraph.

Verbs: **number** and **tense** distinguished.

Continue development of **Number** begun in III.

Give regular rule for **plurals** of nouns. **Irregulars** distinguished.

Develop use of **Apostrophe** also, in connection with **possessive** noun (first general idea of case), plurals; and the possessive with "of," in some cases.

Adjectives or **Modifiers**, employed and discussed in descriptions attempted, and recognized as the simplest kind of **enlargement** of the subject or any **Noun**.

A few **contractions**, using apostrophe in new way: "o'clock," "'tis," "don't," etc. Give exercises in writing these in full.

Begin to use the simplest kind of Dictionary, for spelling, **Syllabification**, and meaning. Explain and call for a few **Synonyms**.

In Composition an advance will be made to the two-paragraph form, to bring the paragraph idea into greater clearness. Work out a simple contrast : the park in winter and summer ; town and country, etc. Stricter attention to Margins, Indentation, and other formalities.

Fifth Grade or Year.

The Enlarged Sentence in Complex Form.

Expand the conception of modifier to include **phrase** and **clause**. Compare with simplest adjective modifiers.

Add the **adverb** as modifying the verb and, later, the adjective.

New use of Comma to mark off clause and phrase.

The Object of the verb distinguished. **Government.**

Objective case recognized (in pronouns) and its use with **prepositions** : " to me " " for you and me." (Develop idea of **case**.)

Pronouns distinguished, growing out of their use in the relative clause.

Comparison of adjectives and adverbs.

Compound nouns and adjectives, with hyphen : use in descriptions ; " sky-blue," " coal-black," etc.

Metaphor and **Personification** recognized.

Exercises in placing of modifiers, and rule as to proper order of words in a sentence.

Treatment of **Inversions**.

In Composition continue two-paragraph form, running into a third paragraph expressing a prefer-

ence for one of two things compared, or including a third member of comparison.

Develop the letter ; begin more formal type.

Draw more generously on good models.

Sixth Grade or Year.

The Enlarged Sentence : Compound Type.

Explain the **Compound Sentence** (*a*) in contrasts or antitheses, introduced by "but" and "yet"; and (*b*) in double or linked affirmations of coördinate values.

The chief aid will be exercises in **expanding**, **condensing**, and **transforming** sentences: putting two or more sentences into one; transforming a sentence into a modifying clause or phrase in another. Ring the changes on complex and compound.

This will mean developing the power to think two things or ideas in relation, and to make combinations, contrasts, and comparisons.

Verb developed: **Voice**; **Auxiliaries**; **Conjugation**; **Principal Parts**.

Conjunctions distinguished: kinds according to kinds of sentence.

Semicolons in Compound Sentence. **Colon** before enumerations and quotations. Metaphors continued, and **Similes**.

Develop Use of Dictionary: Easier diacritical marks.

In Composition continue development of three-paragraph form, with the idea of a Beginning, Middle, and End construction.

Use a developing outline with one or two subheads with an eye to indentation and capitalization.

Seventh Grade or Year.*The Classification of Sentences.*

Survey of the three kinds: Simple, Complex, and Compound; **Dependent** and **Independent**; **Subordinate** and **Coördinate**.

Review and develop **Case** (in connection chiefly with **Pronouns**), and **Prepositions**, with their government. Use of prepositional Genitive and Dative.

The Verb: **transitive** and **intransitive**; **object** and **complement**.

(a) **To be**, developing idea of **inflection** already involved in the treatment of case. The concept of **Person**. Explanation of Nominative following the Verb. Adjective and adverbial complement: "He is tall," "It is well," "He behaves well."

(b) Transitive verbs: **Double object**. **Dative**, first in pronominal form: "I gave him an apple."

Declension of Nouns in full.

Weak and **Strong** Nouns. Irregular plurals and plurals in compounds (brothers-in-law).

Declension of pronouns.

Exercises in **Concord** (**double subject**, etc.) and in the conversion of sentences—complex and compound.

Strengthen and develop the Outline by means of the ideas of dependence and subordination in thought processes.

Letter-writing advanced; letters to be longer and more varied in character—formal and informal in several degrees. Use models.

Eighth Grade or Year.*The Classification and Analysis of Sentences (continued),
and Review.*

New distinctions : declarative, imperative, and interrogative.

Conjugation in full. Mood.

[*Here it must be borne in mind that if the pupil is studying a foreign language, the treatment will be briefer, and the comparative method will be called into play.*]

Use of other auxiliaries : can, may, might, etc.

Exercises in the conversion of tense, voice, and of sentence-type.

Exercises in varying the arrangement of words in sentences.

Synonyms, Homonyms, and Antonyms. (See Bain's suggestions in his "Education as a Science.")

This development becomes desirable in connection with the increasing demand for finer discrimination in the use of words. It may lead into the closer study of words and their composition and **derivation**.

The question — Why have we two words for the same or nearly the same idea? — will lead to a first study of **derivation** and **word-formation**, — Saxon, Classical, and Romance elements ; **prefixes** and **suffixes** : **roots**, **stems**, and **foreign plurals**.

Growing out of this recognition of differences in origin and history, we may go more fully into the conjugation of verbs, **strong** and **weak** forms.

Fuller comprehension of the larger Dictionary ; its signs, etc.

Exercises in converting **direct** into **indirect quotation**, and **vice versa**, may be introduced here.

Complete Analysis of Sentences.

Parts of speech left over : **article, interjection.**

Irregular and convertible parts of speech.

Verbal-nouns, adjective nouns, etc. Noun clauses, etc.

Exercises in different uses of same word.

Gender.

Ellipse (exercises in reducing to and in expanding).

If time allows, follow up beginnings of word-study.

The growth of language. Sources of English in relation to history. Shakespeare's English (if Shakespeare has been read at all). **Dialect, Slang.** Spelling and its anomalies. Changes going on. New words for new things. More synonyms : pairs, contrasts.

Exercises in **obversions** (as recommended by Bain)

(*e.g.* Heat favors vegetation ; cold retards it).

Review according to time at disposal.

If this sketch-plan raises as many questions as it suggests solutions (which is to be expected), it must be borne in mind that its purpose here is roughly to illustrate, and to justify provisionally, the conception of a possible organic development of language and grammar work by the inductive method. The plan is being experimented with, and many of its features are under trial. Improvements will come only after much more testing and, above all, much discussion and comparison between teachers and systems.

PART II

THE HIGH SCHOOL COURSE

CHAPTER XIII

GENERAL AIMS: CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF THE ADOLESCENT PERIOD

"IN healthy natures it is the golden age of life," says Dr. Stanley Hall of the period of adolescence ; and this conviction may well inspire the work of the High School teacher. This golden age does undoubtedly offer rare and peculiar opportunities to the educator. The young nature, crossing the threshold of adult years, expands with almost sudden access of life. It is an age of new birth, of quick changes and swift maturing ; the age for the taking of vows and assuming of responsibilities ; the age of confirmation and self-dedication. In the course of a few years the slim, frocked girl becomes the gowned and dignified woman ; the boy's piping treble turns to a manly bass. Features take a firmer cast ; the limbs a settled pose and gait. And this outward change of life, as we significantly phrase it, is accompanied by inward mutations no less marked. The nature vibrates with new longings and resolves, deeper admirations and hopes, strange curiosities and doubts. The tumult and trouble of the springtide are in the brain and heart no less.

As a rule these four years of High School life are to count for more in determining the set of the character than any other four years of life. When at this time the throng of new interests, tastes, and desires declare themselves; when, one after another, literature and music and the arts—nature, solitude, religion, humanitarian enterprise, adventure—make appeal to the sensitive nature, it becomes a matter of chief moment whether what are often mere transiencies of impulse and liking, mere shy, fleeting visitants asking food and shelter, are to receive a hearty and hospitable welcome, or are to be excluded (forever, as it often proves) from a home in the soul. Are they to grow from more to more under generous hospitality, or to die of inanition and neglect? The High School teacher may be a large—sometimes the largest—factor in deciding the answers to these vital questions.

During such a germinant period Literature may exercise its maximum of humanizing influence; and how it may be used to this end should, to our mind, be the leading concern of the teacher. The statements which one commonly meets of the aims that should control the teaching of English in the High School are, we hold, not only inadequate, but misleading. For example: the teacher of English, we are told by an accredited authority, is “to introduce his pupils to English literature; to awaken the dormant language sense, the linguistic consciousness, with reference to the mother-

tongue; to stimulate and direct the ambition for neat and comely expression." So far, so good; but not far enough. And to the same effect is this statement by another concerning literary aims: the reading done "will have for its main purpose the cultivation of a taste for the best books, and the inculcation of the habit of always having a good book to read." Again, good, but not good enough,—there is not enough red blood in it. We must get behind this booky view to the large human view, and hold steadily to it; the view that finds expression in the great masters and critics of letters. Let us take one instance of it from an impressive source, the master-critic of modern times, Sainte-Beuve. "I hold very little to literary opinions. Literary opinions occupy very little place in my life and in my thoughts. What does occupy me seriously is life itself and the object of it." This is cited by a disciple, Matthew Arnold, who takes the same attitude, holding that poetry, Literature generally, is to be appraised according to its soundness as a criticism of life. And these two men are above suspicion on literary grounds; both had an exquisite sense of the beauty of literary art and of the excellences of style. Let us too, then, use Literature in this spirit to aid our young men and women to interpret life, to see life, to respond to the spectacle and drama of life.

If the teacher of English is to conceive of his office as being less that of instructing the young how to read

with understanding and to speak and write correctly, than that of developing the higher emotional and rational nature,—its sympathies and vision, its loves and hates, its ideals and aspirations, and its powers of self-command, self-organization, and self-expression through its use of language,—then he has a very heavy responsibility put upon him. For no teacher is it more important than it is for him to be conversant with the psychological phenomena of adolescence. He should know his every chance to catch incipient tendencies; and out of the new instincts and emotions, as they arise, he should try to establish permanent intellectual interests. In this period it is especially obvious that the emotions lead, and that it is out of the seething emotional life of the youth that the ethical and intellectual interests and proclivities are to be kindled. Among all the subjects of study it is by art, and chiefly by literary art, that this emotional life is to be nurtured, clarified, and illumined. We say “among the subjects of study,” because more potent than any other influence should be that of the teacher himself. It behooves the teacher to remember that unless the radiant ideals of manhood and womanhood prefigured in Literature receive support and countenance in the manliness and womanliness of the teacher, they lose much of their effect. The teacher must make all types of excellence seem possible. How much is the vital force and example of a Brutus, or a King Arthur, or a Quen-

tin Durward discounted in the hands of a maudlin or crabbed teacher! How easily may the womanly charm and healthy strength of a Portia or a Rosalind suffer detraction at the hands of a sleek sentimentalism or Puritan primness!¹

In prescribing the literature that is to be read during the High School period, we must allow several factors to count. These may be ranged under two main divisions: first, the characteristics, the needs, and the interests of the adolescent period; and secondly, the vocational and social demands made upon High School education. The two requirements must be kept in mind: general culture, or education for a typical, ideal manhood and womanhood; and preparation to meet the actual demands of life and a specific kind of social environment. Education cannot be simply for power and for general culture; it must likewise be a novitiate for life, and must clear an opening into the

¹ We cannot forbear to register here, for its intimate bearing on this subject, our conviction of the importance of securing a much larger proportion of men teachers in our schools,—more particularly in the upper grades of the Grammar School and throughout the High School. Both our girls and boys show the lack of virile influences. Many of our boys leave school without having come into close contact with men teachers, with a strong yet gracious manliness. As a consequence the virtues are forever associated with something of feminine delicacy and concession. In the adolescent stage, and in relation to English teaching especially, a judicious combination of men and women teachers is essential; men to predominate with the boys, and women with the girls. Surely, this only is consistent co-education.

vocations. The very important facts must be faced that the overwhelming majority of High School graduates conclude their academic education when they graduate; and yet that large numbers pass from the High School into the professional and technical schools, omitting college training. Most of them go forth into the workshop of the world to labor severally according to their gifts and opportunities; some into a technical institute to serve an apprenticeship in a selected calling; others, into college. The High School should therefore have enabled them to discover their gifts, and should have emphasized their cultivation with an outlook toward the vocation for which they fit. The public expects as much; and from the American point of view, rightly so. A vast amount of time is being wasted in collegiate education upon unpropitious material that needs other methods of treatment.

The High School course in English, therefore, must be framed to subserve this double preparation: it must aid in the preparation for social and personal life, — that is, for manhood and womanhood and citizenship; it must also aid in the choice of, and advance toward, a vocation. Incidentally it must dovetail into the higher institutions of learning and craftsmanship, academic and professional. Incidentally, we say, because these institutions have no peculiar demands to make on the High School other than those which these schools

should make on themselves,—namely, that the work they undertake to do shall be well done. Of these two general purposes, that of general culture must be the controlling one. We have many types of character to keep in mind and to develop. All we can do is to allow a free play of these considerations upon the problem of selection, and let now one end and now another determine our preferences and keep us sufficiently catholic. There must be variety in our work, and yet we must not be led into scrappiness and miscellaneousness.

It is at this point that there will be a clash—felt nowhere so much as in the English work—between the old ideal which emphasizes formal discipline and thoroughness in a few things, and the new which emphasizes culture-content and many-sided development in the interest not only of broad-based character, but of the discovery of all forms of aptitude. We say that this conflict of ideals perplexes no one so much as the English teacher. The teacher of languages, of Mathematics, and even of Science (though less here) is troubled little by it: he has a comparatively clear piece of work cut out for him. He *must* be thorough in the old-fashioned sense. With him culture-content must be for some time a secondary consideration: he must work for a mastery of the tools first. But for the larger purposes of literary study and of dealing with the native tongue, the tools are approximately mastered for

the purpose in hand. What we shall read for the large ends of character and culture, is the question. Shall we read much or little? intensively or extensively? We say unhesitatingly that the ideal must be one of breadth; the aim being that of evoking, disciplining, and nurturing all types of character and endowment.

Now, deep-rooted as may be our desire for thoroughness, and a few things very well done rather than many things fairly done (and we believe that we must and can achieve both these), a brief survey of the characteristics of the adolescent period will convince us that there are strong reasons for liberality in the direction of variety. For while it is true that this phase of growth is characterized by a development of the power of concentrated and sustained attention, which will lead us to provide some intensive work of a severer kind for the adolescent, it is also true that in healthy natures this concentration is directed in waves of changing interest upon many objects. The quickly budding instincts (which will unfortunately bring with them, at times, a sequence of enthusiasms, adorations, fads) must get a chance to deploy themselves and reveal their significance. We can never be sure which of them will but flash into momentary blaze, and which will burn with steady and brightening flame. Better let them kindle than smoulder; burn out rather than receive a damper from the teacher. After we have smiled away not a little folderol and discounted heavily a crop of un-

proven generalities and statistical caprices of recent essays on adolescence, we may at least recognize that in our choice of literature we must accommodate ourselves to certain marked changes that overtake the boy and girl during the four years of High School life. For instance, it ought to meet and form and exalt the nascent sex-consciousness by literature that touches nobly and simply the theme of romantic love, and presents healthy and formative types of manhood and womanhood. It ought to provide food and outlet for the religious and ethical instincts that mature during what is preëminently the period of "conversions," as the psychologists tell us. It ought to feed that feeling for Nature which one statistician records as the most universal of the emotions of youth. And it ought to cater mildly to those sudden, and also generally short-lived, "crazes" for different forms of art, music, acting, etc., which are manifestations of a quickened sensitiveness to beauty. And these instinctive tendencies seem to develop contemporaneously, to sweep on to a maximum of energy, and then either to decline or to survive, weakly or vigorously, as the case may be. We can do no more than aim to lengthen out the stage of fruition, to catch and carry forward the really dominating, deeper instincts and interests peculiar to each nature, and to preserve a certain residuum of lingering, sympathetic interest in those matters that awaken only short-lived interest.

These considerations alone give great weight to the contention that we must aim largely at general culture. This need not mean, however, a superficial and sweeping eclecticism that would ignore the importance of a certain thoroughness, or a regard for the intensive quality we alluded to a moment ago; but it means a generous and, for the time being, lively and concentrated concern with literature that shall meet these varied and fluctuating needs of the adolescent nature. It means that this period must not be regarded as one for the refinements of exact scholarship; for a contraction of interests; for an exclusion of the so-called diversions, cutting off the side-glances at the varied vocations and avocations that tempt the experimental longings of youth. This would be wrong in a period of dilation and experimentation, of testing and trying, of laying broad and firm foundations.

There remains for special mention one other aspect of the interests of the adolescent that has to be taken account of in our selection of literature. The period is often thought of as being a period of "storm and stress": the youth is the subject of all sorts of clashings and contradictions. So, indeed, it often is; and the perplexing fact in the situation is that each of the contending powers has a modicum of right on its side. For example, it is a time when the senses and the passions are powerfully stirred; and yet it is a time also when latent idealism asserts itself, and the sharpened intel-

lect refuses to be blinded by sense-allurements. It is a time when the "ego" has its birth and may push on toward the brink of self-absorption and morbid introspection; a time of self-scrutiny and self-discovery, when the youth asks, What am I fit for? Where do I belong?—a time when the thirst for independence is keen. Yet it is also the time when the social nature, the sense of solidarity, the spirit of loyalty, the love of man and a headlong devotion to causes and to persons, even to the extent of heroic self-sacrifice, gains headway; in fine, when the claims of society and the supremacy of social considerations are recognized. It is likewise a time when, as it has been phrased, the youth delights in "team-work," in self-subordination, or unselfish leadership in the service of the team; when the more individualistic sports and recreations of earlier years give place to coöperative, social games. And yet it is a time when the spirit of selfish ambition, rivalry, and jealousy may become fierce and bitter. It is a time when the youth or the maid finds a deepening pleasure in the company of the other sex, and yet draws further and further away in interests and occupations from it.

The duty of the teacher of Literature is to work for the higher harmony of these contending powers by purging them of their baser and morbid elements. Not, let us hasten to say, by making the youth keenly aware of the conflict. He will become aware of it

soon enough. We must not precipitate it. We must meet it and use it when it emerges; but as a general rule, we must work, when we can, to develop the higher powers to unconscious supremacy. It is safe to lean, in this period of dawning introspection, in the direction of a healthy objectivity. With this precaution, we shall strive, not to suppress, but to purify and exalt alike the legitimate self-regarding and self-denying instincts; egoistic, individualistic tendencies, and social and devotional ones; the pure pleasures of sense and the lofty pleasures of mind; the capacity for happy, untroubled enjoyment, and yet the duty of austere self-refusal, and the willingness to bear pain and discomfort.

The literature we select for study must be eclectic enough to cover this wide field of contradictory tendencies. And, first, in dealing with the literature of passion, it will be wise to keep in mind the truth that passion to be pure must be strong, and that it is not intensity but impurity that must be shunned. (The teacher must not be a Laodicean.) That is why a novel of romantic love like "Lorna Doone" may well find place in our reading list; why the story of Arthur's regal love, marred though it is by guilty Guinevere's disloyalty, may be used; why the nobler subjectivity and egoism of Shelley and Byron will make of the best of the former's lyrics (the "Skylark," the "Ode to the West Wind," and parts of "Alastor")

and the "Childe Harold" of the latter, influences for good; why the lovely, unsullied sensuousness of Keats should be familiarized through the "Eve of St. Agnes," and the Odes; why we should in our senior classes use "Comus," with its high debate upon chastity; why the darker tragic contest between good and evil in the heart should (if not fingered too curiously) lead us into the study of "Macbeth," "Richard III," or another of Shakespeare's tragic masterpieces. Yes, and let us not forget the tonic ministry of humor, to save sentimentally inclined young people from the posing solemnities and conceits of self-important youthfulness; so that Touchstone and Bottom, and Sir Roger and mine host of the "Rainbow" and his rustic patrons, shall help to preserve a healthy balance of the emotions, and a due sense of intellectual proportion.

So much, then, in regard to the character-needs and culture-needs of the adolescent. We would add only this brief word of summary: The English course must be fashioned with an eye to all the leading types of character and proclivity,—the intellectual or scientific type, the humanitarian, the artistic, and the practical. It must correct the exclusiveness and threatening narrowness of any one of them, and yet minister at times to each in its legitimate and peculiar needs.

We have now to consider the second set of considerations that are to guide us in our choice of literature,—those of the more practical order that look

specifically toward social needs and vocational ends. There is in the public mind an expectation that, as the result of the High School work, our youth shall be so much at home in the world of books as to be able to draw upon them with facility to meet the emergencies of daily life,—draw upon them for professional or business purposes, for models and aids in the letter-writing, the speech-making, the story-telling, the reciting, and other forms of entertaining that fall to the lot of most of us. This is a natural and proper expectation. The student should have learned in a general way what sources of information a good library affords, should know how to consult it for a variety of purposes, and how expeditiously to run down any reference that occurs in his daily reading. There ought to be a good reference library in the school, to which the student should resort continually; and our tasks should take him from time to time to the large public library for research and verification.

More than this, our work must serve the useful end of discovering aptitudes and opening up certain vocations. The teacher of Literature (more cautiously than other teachers, because of the literary illusion that so easily haunts youth) must have a thought for those vocations in which distinctively literary gifts find employment,—those of the journalist, the librarian, the actor, the preacher, the teacher,

the public speaker, the lawyer, and even the author. A foremost aim of all education must be that of helping the youth to ignite at that point of interest which a special aptitude in him creates; and why not literary aptitudes as well as others? the aptitudes that draw toward the newspaper office, the pulpit, the library, the stage, the court room, or the school, no less the aptitudes that draw toward the mine, the foundry, the shop, the architect's office, or the artist's studio?

Admitting the validity of such practical demands, along with the general educational and cultural demands made upon us, our selected reading matter must be varied enough to include examples of all the leading types of literature. For instance, journalism and the journalist is inevitably suggested by our study of Addison and Steele and the "Spectator," as well as by various series of sketches, such *e.g.* as Irving's "Sketch Book"; the lawyer and the man of affairs are before us in the study of Webster's or Burke's speeches and orations; the book-lover, suggestive of the ideal librarian, is before us when we read Lamb (notably his "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading"), Emerson's or Carlyle's essays on books, or Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies"; the actor inevitably comes to mind with the study and recitation of Shakespeare; while in Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero-worship," with which we become acquainted

in connection with the "Essay on Burns," required for college entrance, we have the career of the man of letters and the poet invested with great attractiveness. The study of these masterpieces involves systematic work in public speaking and debate and in dramatic representation. It will be well also to provide for the organization and management, under the care of the students, of a select school or class library, and the encouragement of a school paper which shall have its intimate connection with the class-room work. Thus doors may be opened invitingly to the curious, tempting the talented to enter and linger. Thus the predestined Aladdin may find, as he explores a fascinating region, the lamp that is to shed light on his path through life.

CHAPTER XIV

LITERATURE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL: PLAN AND MATERIALS

WE pass now, after our rapid survey of general literary aims, ethical and practical, during the four years of the High School, to a consideration of the details of the work and the stages of progression.

As to the beginnings, experience in teaching both the higher Grammar Grades and High School freshmen, has borne in upon us the importance of investing the High School period with distinctive character,—of fostering in the freshman a strong sense of the new page turned, the new chapter begun, the fresh start, the new opportunity. This result will to some extent come of itself. The freshman feels at once, by the less regimental treatment, the larger trust, the expectation of stricter self-government, that he has advanced a step toward the life of freedom. The organization of the studies under a body of specialists is an intimation that higher and more exacting work is to be required of him. The appearance of the elective factor—in the matter of foreign languages at any rate (we will not gnaw here at this scarred

bone of contention)—brings with it thoughts of a life-career which give a new sense of nearness to manhood's responsibilities.

We believe in utilizing this factor in the English work. Let us signalize this new departure. We have found a certain virtue in using the term Rhetoric in conjunction with our Composition, just to give the sense of a *terra incognita*; of a new outlook on the composition work from a more commanding elevation. We have avoided Grammar if our freshmen have had a strong, recent dose of it. We have tried to strike a new vein of interest in the reading matter, and to indicate that we are taking a step forward in our methods of study. Our first written exercise has been a series of questions as to previous work in English,—books read in and out of school, the part reading has played in the student's life, his preferences, and how they have changed, etc. This inventory is, for many reasons, an invaluable document; and until it is received, all plans for the year's work must be to some extent provisional. The wise teacher will not be satisfied with it alone. He will get all available information concerning the schools from which his students have come, and the course of English study pursued there.

Following the same cue, and realizing the importance of beginnings in all things, the teacher will be careful to plan certain typical lessons and experi-

ences for the newcomers, which shall suggest the spirit and the atmosphere that is to surround the work. There is to be enlarged recognition of individual rights and responsibilities, to meet the growth of the feeling of realized selfhood that is proper to the adolescent period. Each pupil will be gently thrown back upon himself by being asked at an early moment to do an individual piece of work — report to his class on this or that matter.

Again, because this period is marked by a greater capacity of intellectual labor and concentrated attention, the first tasks will announce to the class that more prolonged and more absorbed effort is to be exacted of them. But this severer effort is to be made in an air of quiet, promoting an eager yet tranquil activity. For it is a peculiarity of the adolescent period that, while the pulse of life beats strong, while vitality is at the flood and emotion is often torrential, there is great danger of overstimulating and overtaxing. This new life, while it must find sufficient outlet, must also be husbanded. "Inspire enthusiastic activity," is the safest motto for the teacher at this time, counsels Dr. Stanley Hall; but he is also very insistent that we must avoid a prodigal employment of this "new and final invoice of energy." It is the more necessary to conduct the work in a spirit of glad yet quiet diligence, because these young men and women (notably the young women) are subject, many

of them, to moods or spells, now of inertia, and now of unwonted activity; of elation, and depression (thoughts of suicide are not uncommon at this time, we are told). So that we shall aim in these first recitations and meetings with our freshmen to strike the key-note of dignified and tranquil, yet inspiring and laborious effort. We are going to work for the sake of the joy in the work, yet sometimes grimly against the grain for ends to be taken on trust.

With such thoughts in our minds, we shall be careful to choose promising reading matter, to make a start with, preferably two or three short selections in poetry and prose; following a rule—to be observed through the High School course—of sandwiching the quieter books judiciously among the more exciting ones. These “points of rest” give a happy rhythm to the work. After the stir and tension of works like “The Ancient Mariner,” “The Tale of Two Cities,” “Julius Cæsar,” “Macbeth,” let us have the contrasting calm of “The Deserted Village” or Gray’s “Elegy,” of Lamb or Hawthorne, of Sir Roger and Mr. Spectator and the Rev. Dr. Primrose.

What particular works we select for our first year students will depend largely upon our general scheme for the four years. The simplest scheme is that which adapts itself in part to the composition work. In the first year a generous proportion of the books will be of the narrative order; in the second, following the change

of emphasis in the composition work, descriptive literature will receive special attention; while masterpieces of exposition and argument will claim attention in the third and fourth years. But it is one thing to allow a certain emphasis to fall, now upon narrative, and now upon descriptive literature and so on, following the composition work; quite another to confine attention almost exclusively in any year to one or the other order. In the first place,—repeating our argument in Chapter XI,—the student is concerned in his varied daily work with all forms of composition; secondly, there is no principle of logical progression that either binds the different kinds of writing together in a given sequence, or clearly separates them,—at least, this is true of narration and description, which overlap; thirdly, we need some variety for the sake of the varied interests and quick contemporaneous developments of the adolescent period; fourthly, the mind does not develop in any such linear fashion, but is advancing in the sum of its powers, including the reasoning and argumentative powers, the recognition of which we so often delay until the third or fourth year; lastly, the scheme is too long drawn out and monotonous,—an objection that applies with special force to a year's occupation with description and the descriptive type of literary masterpiece. We should as little think of prescribing for each of the four years an exclusive study of the novel, the epic, the essay, and the speech respec-

tively. We rather recommend a scheme that includes in each year's work most of the leading types of literary art, with intensive, emphasized work (correlating with the composition, — where, however, we must equally avoid monotony) during part of the year in one direction. Thus, we should feed and develop the various powers of the mind, — inventional, constructive, imaginative, observational, reasoning, and persuasive, — while these would receive each in its turn that intensive, systematic, analytical treatment that gives to the student the self-conscious mastery of them.

Our first year's course will, then, take shape after this fashion. Emphasis at the outset will be upon narrative literature, and for these reasons: it gives a wholesome objective bias to the work; it carries over the tendencies of what we have called the epic phase of the higher Grammar Grades into the incipient stage of the adolescent period, before many of the students have reached the age of puberty; and it enables us to settle down to the large structural aspects and problems that are basic in advanced literary studies. We shall deal with the ballad, expanding into the short epic, noting the difference between the lyric and the epic mode; and with the short story, leading us on to the novel, noting the differences between these two species upon which Professor Brander Matthews has insisted in his "Philosophy of the Short Story." We shall not attempt to go far into theory at this stage —

only so far as will enable the student to appreciate more keenly the excellences of the typical masterpieces he is reading. This work will find its natural complement in the study of a play by Shakespeare, the emphasis being distributed between the structural and poetic features and the character interest of the play.

As to the works to be selected for these varied studies, we shall be guided by what our freshman class has read. If they have not taken Scott, we may use him,—a ballad, an epic, a novel. Rossetti's ballad of "The White Ship," and Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum" or "Balder Dead," among the shorter epics, are especially suitable. We have found few things better than the parts of the "Odyssey" (in Bryant's version), brought together in No. 43 of the Riverside Literature series, under the title "Ulysses among the Phæacians," which can be timed for the moment when the class is busy in its history work with the early Greek period. The relation of the ballad to the epic may be brought out strikingly in dealing with Homer; and a ballad or lyric treatment of some of the episodes that are included in our selection may be used for comparative purposes. The story of the "Odyssey" as a whole also gives us a chance to work in some of the loveliest of lyrics on classic themes,—Tennyson's "Lotos Eaters," Dobson's "Prayer of the Swine to Circe," and many other stories which the teacher will find in Gayley's indispensable "Classic Myths in English Literature" (Ginn). What

task can be more stimulating to the teacher than that of bringing his students, at such a critical transitional moment in their lives, into touch with Homer and the noble simplicity of the Homeric world;—with Ulysses at his best; with the athletic youth of Phæacia; with the magical grace of Nausicaa's robust young womanhood; with the refined simplicity of the royal household of Arete, and the chaste beauty of Phæacia's craftsmanship and life?

Also as to the short story and the novel, we shall draw upon Hawthorne or Poe, Irving ("Tales of a Traveller" preferably), Kipling, Scott, Stevenson, Dickens, or Thackeray, according to the conditions by which we find ourselves confronted.

In addition to this study of the narrative poem in association with the ballad, and of the short story leading on to the novel and the play, we shall make room for a generous supply of lyric poetry, and the beginnings of public speaking and debate. In the High School no less than in the Elementary School, much lyric poetry would be learned, and sung or recited, in connection with the commemorations and festivals, the morning exercises, and the entertainments given by the school. On this head we must refer to our general treatment of the matter in Chapter X.

The work in public speaking and debate should be the beginning of a course that is to be carried through the four years of the High School; and it will be

convenient to outline it at this point. An interest in debating will have manifested itself doubtless — at least on the boys' part — in the upper Grammar Grades ; and some teachers have successfully organized work in debating there. The zest is often keen in the High School freshmen. We should gratify it informally at first, and make our beginning, as part of the work in composition, with the writing and delivery of short speeches of a commemorative rather than of an argumentative character. Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech will give us an initial impulse, the student trying his hand at brief orations for use at the Thanksgiving Day or Memorial Day exercises, or short eulogies for Washington's or Lincoln's Birthday. Other types of short speeches — the complimentary speech suitable to the class-gathering or surprise-party, the birthday celebration, or what not — may be worked in. This may be made valuable in developing a sense of differences in literary tone and style — in literary pitch ; and it will give steadiness and address in platform work, and impart a touch of reality and immediacy to the literary studies.

In the second and third years this work in oratory and debate may be carried steadily forward into the field of argument, the school debating club being utilized as an indispensable annex ; and in the fourth year it may find its culmination in connection with the study of Burke's Speech on Conciliation, required, as it fortu-

nately happens, for college entrance. The studies would aim at the development of the reasoning powers, would involve an elementary study of logic, and would centre in the preparation of the notes and briefs to be used in speech-making. The student would be taught how to work up topics, and how to apply, in a new way and with obvious exigency, the principles of literary construction (unity, clearness, coherence, repetition, summary, illustration, figures, climax, etc.) which he has previously seen in relation to the narrative and the description. It is remarkable how much these are vitalized by the needs of the debate. In the third year there might be valuable intensive work on Webster.¹ The teacher will find many available cheap texts that will furnish material from which the student will be able to draw much nutritive thought, and catch the glow of an ardent patriotism and humanitarianism: Lincoln's and Washington's Speeches, Schurz's Eulogy of Lincoln, Webster's Speeches, and some of Emerson's and Lowell's Addresses, in the Riverside series; Curtis on the Public Duty of Educated Men, some of the Campaign Speeches of Lincoln and Douglas, etc., in Maynard's English Classic series.

¹ An admirable text-book would be Professor F. V. Scott's edition of some of Webster's Speeches in Longmans' English Classics. It contains valuable suggestions for the teacher that are pertinent to the object we have in mind here. It needs supplementing, however, by the texts of Webster's argumentative speeches. The bibliography on p. xxxiii will put the teacher in the way of many helps toward the elaboration of his

How much time should be spared for this work must depend upon the teacher's power and equipment, and upon the school conditions. It might be made an elective, and an adjunct of the debating club. We have known it to be worked in as a Friday afternoon "special," taking the place that used to be held by the old-fashioned Friday afternoon "rhetoricals." But such a course has so much to yield of both pleasure and profit, and has such obvious bearing upon the education for citizenship in a democracy, that we should give it an hour a week — if necessary, one of the three hours assigned to Literature — during the first or second year, or both; and in the third and fourth years would add some weeks of intensive work upon Webster and Burke, as already suggested.

In passing on now, after disposing of the whole subject of oratory and debate, to the planning of our literary studies for the second, third, and fourth years, we must not fail to note what rapid changes, what quick maturing of faculty, is taking place in our boys and girls. There is a striking difference between the first and the fourth year students; the child has become the young man and young woman — the young woman outdistancing the youth in many directions (perceptive

course; but it calls for a few recent additions, such as Lamont's "Specimens of Exposition," Baker's "Specimens of Argumentation," Baker's "Principles of Argumentation," MacEwan's "Essentials of Argumentation," and Buck's "A Course in Argumentative Writing."

power, artistic feeling, *e.g.*), and being much nearer the goal of adult ripeness. Were it not that the scale of the present treatment of our subject forbids, we should have to go into the question of the desirability of a differentiation of the work of girls and boys. Undoubtedly certain sex differences, which the teacher of English cannot fail to notice, manifest themselves at this time; and it is to our minds an open question whether regard should not be paid at this stage to these differences in the English work.¹ This rapid ripening of adult instincts and insight will make some difference in what we select, and still more in the temper in which we deal with it, the plane of our treatment.

As to the order of our studies, confining our attention for the moment to the works prescribed for college entrance, we may note that the lists for 1903-4-5 contain three novels and three of Shakespeare's plays. How shall we distribute these through our four years? We may reject with a mere word the proposals either to put most of them into the third and

¹ The subject is touched on in Professor Clark Wissler's "The Interests of Children in the Reading Work of the Elementary Schools" (*Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. V, pp. 523-540), quoted at length in Professor Thorndike's Monograph on "The Study of Children" (*Teachers College Record*, Vol. II, No. 3), which contains an allusion also (p. 29) to Miss Clara Vostrovsky's study on the same subject. See also Professor S. Thurber's address on "English Literature in Girls' Education" (*School Review*, Vol. II, 6, June, 1894). We take the opportunity to advise the young teacher to allow none of Mr. Thurber's papers, scattered through the periodicals, to escape his clutches.

fourth years, with a view to the expediencies of examination, or to leave all the "Study" books for the fourth year. We have already disapproved of the plan to put all the novels into the first year, or even the first and second years, for the sake of parallelism with composition work in Narration and Description respectively. We should also refuse to follow historical considerations. We must be guided by ethical and æsthetic demands. The history of literature is of secondary importance in the High School period. We must work with might and main for literary appreciation, regardless for the most part of all extraneous considerations. The sensible course to pursue, in dealing with Shakespeare's plays, *e.g.*, is to deal with them in the order of their artistic and ethical complexity. "Macbeth" we shall leave to the very last, and shall have prepared the way for an appreciation of that by previous progressive work on "Julius Cæsar" and "The Merchant of Venice," "As You Like It," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Richard III," etc. Our work will have been cumulative; there will have been a gradual year-to-year growth in the power to appreciate and interpret Shakespeare.

So, too, with the three novels. The natural course to pursue will be to begin with the novel of the simplest *genre*, the historical novel and novel of adventure, — "Ivanhoe," say; then to pass on to the novel of manners, the "Vicar of Wakefield," and the novel of char

acter, "Silas Marner," so leading on, as a result of our study of George Eliot, to the more pronouncedly problem novel and psychological novel of to-day, by way of works like "Romola" and "Felix Holt," "The House of the Seven Gables," "Esmond" and "Pendennis," "Nicholas Nickleby," and "The Tale of Two Cities" — to mention no others. This is to follow, or rather to wait upon, the maturing vision and feeling of our students. We cannot force the pace. We cannot take the kingdom of perfection by violence. We cannot despatch at a single attack this or the other type of literature. We have not a matter of scientific principle or progress to deal with here; but the gradual, insensible formation of taste, judgment, imagination, sympathy. We most heartily reëcho these wise words of Professor Samuel Thurber, "If I have any pedagogic conviction more especially rooted in my philosophy than any other, it is this, — that a moral or æsthetic principle cannot be communicated *ab extra*, but must be grown up to by innumerable accretions of insight." In this spirit we say, then, in regard to the arrangement of our course of English Study, that we must use our best forethought and ingenuity in planning how our students may grow up, step by step, year by year, to the appreciation in the fourth year of the "big things" on the College entrance list; and any others of our own selecting: "Macbeth," Burke on Conciliation, Milton's "Comus" and "Lycidas," Macaulay's Essay on Milton, — we do not name

the "Princess," which we regard as an unwise selection, and have so learned by experience.

Guided by the general principles, we may begin our second year by working the descriptive vein. Now is the time for such works as Gray's "Elegy" (with "Thanatopsis" and Dekker's and Shirley's Verses on Death), "Childe Harold," "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," "Snowbound," "The Cotter's Saturday Night," "The Eve of St. Agnes"; for short lyrics of the more descriptive order, and a few that have the subjective touch felt in Shelley's and Wordsworth's poems on the Skylark, Emerson's "Rhodora," and "Titmouse," and "Humble Bee"; while in prose we have Stevenson (the novels and "Travels with a Donkey"), "Lorna Doone" (for home reading, and class discussion), some of Burroughs's nature studies, some history selections (Green or Motley), and late in the year the "Idylls of the King" and the "Merchant of Venice" as the large items of our year's work. How these are to be utilized we shall explain in our next chapter. How to cover so much ground satisfactorily, will be explained by what we have to say concerning methods of treatment.

The third year student generally begins to show some encouraging effects of the first two years of steady work. Evidences of a maturing sense of form and style, of sensitiveness to some of the finer qualities of poetry, begin to manifest themselves. This outcropping of results for which the teacher has been working patiently, are

his reward for much apparently ineffectual effort during those two or three years. We can be more sturdy in our work, can attempt a little criticism and some elementary work in *Æsthetics*, gathering our energies for deeper appreciation in the fourth year. We may start this third year — while the principles of exposition are engaging attention in our composition — with some of Dryden and Pope. If we use that convenient collection, Syle's "From Milton to Tennyson" (Allyn & Bacon), — and we have found either that volume or Hales' "Longer English Poems" (Macmillan), or George's "Chaucer to Arnold" (Macmillan), and Pancoast's "Introduction to English Literature" (Holt) indispensable at this stage, — we shall take its appropriate selections from Dryden and Pope, adding for collateral reading "Palamon and Arcite" (for plot interest and a little comparative work with Chaucer), the "Essay on Criticism," and the "Rape of the Lock"; and then we may pass on to such recent poetry in this mode as Arnold's "Scholar Gypsy," adding "Thyrsis" and some of Arnold's lyrics, and, of course, the "Forsaken Merman," — for who would omit that bewitching, sea-sprayed song? For prose of the expository order we might take either a few of Bacon's Essays, some Bible selections, "Pilgrim's Progress," Carlyle's Essay on Burns, or Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies." This is the year, also, for some of Lamb's Essays and Sir Roger de Coverley, per-

haps some of Stevenson's Essays, and, in connection with the De Coverley papers, Macaulay's Essay on Addison. We must not forget the intensive work on Webster's orations and speeches already sketched in connection with the special course of public-speaking and debating ; and we must also allow time at the end to keep our progressive study of Shakespeare going, selecting "Midsummer Night's Dream," or "As You Like It," or "Twelfth Night," or one of the historical plays. (We should *not* take at any time during the course either "Hamlet," "King Lear," or "Othello.")

The fourth year will start with Burke's Speech on Conciliation, while the stress in our composition work is upon argument — a tough piece of work that may very well employ the fresh energies of the early part of the school year. This done, we can, with an eye both to establishing our reading in historic perspective and to refreshing our memories of works read and authors studied, go to "Macbeth" (rounding off our Shakespearean studies), then to "Comus" and "Lycidas," following it by Macaulay's Milton Essay, by means of which our students ought to have a good idea of the course of culture and literary development during the progress of the Renaissance and the Reformation in England. We may then pass on to gather up the threads of that interesting "period of prose" from Dryden up through Pope, Addison, Steele, Johnson, and Goldsmith, and come to the beginning of the

Romantic Movement, reserving or reviewing "The Ancient Mariner," and grouping Byron, Keats, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley; passing on to Tennyson, with a little comparative work upon Browning, if we have a class of good enough quality to undertake the comparison. We are here suggesting the utmost that may be done with students of good quality, and in a school which avoids the make-up-for-lost-time rush of a year of cram for college.

An alternative to the historic survey and study is comparative work on the drama. Reserving "Macbeth" for the last of our studies, we can work out from it into a comparative study of some Greek tragedy (*Æschylus*' "Prometheus Bound," and *Sophocles*' "Œdipus"), or a French or German play, according to the proficiency of our class in their French and German studies. This is a question of turning the work in other languages to account in our English class. Occasionally one may be able to utilize the *Book of Job* in such comparative work.

Whether we take this latter alternative will depend upon the importance we attach to a knowledge of the history of literature, and the reflection of the *Zeit-Geist* in the works of the masters. We should devote, we have said above, very little time in the High School to historical considerations. A fair sense of historic succession may be gradually built up in the student's mind. Each new author read should be put into time-

relations with those already studied, and occasionally the cultural evolution of the period may be touched upon. We know no more effective way of doing this than to work out with increasing detail a chart in which should be incorporated the salient historic facts as they emerge. Nicols's and Ryland's Tables of Literature and History will be useful in this connection, and so will the tables in Pancoast's History and in Longmans' or other editions of School Classics.

Just how far the personal and biographical interest — the time and place interest, the anecdotal interest — shall be developed in our work, it is impossible to say with any touch of dogmatism. The teacher's leading purpose must be to get the student to read, appreciate, and evaluate the great creative works. He will grudge much time taken from that to read books about books. He may flavor at times with the solider kind of literary gossip. When he is reading Goldsmith and Johnson with his class, it would be strange were he not tempted into the by-paths of picturesque personalities by Boswell's "Johnson," which he should consider it wicked not to introduce to his students. Much may be introduced by the way. Occasional lantern talks and lectures on general topics should be given; and generous but judicious use made of pictures of authors and places, and illustrated editions of their works (Abbey's "Shakespeare," Thompson's "Sir

Roger," etc.). The students may use illustrative material in their note-books, and contribute to a general school collection. The more suggestive and speaking the class-room atmosphere, the better. Few of us will be able to realize what Mr. George has realized in his English room at Newton, but we can all strive for something of the sort; we can all keep advancing toward the goal set up by Professor Genung in the following stimulating passage:—

"Our school rooms suggest in various ways the matter-of-fact, the practical, the utilitarian, and this is right; benches and desks are for study; books to be thumbed and ground up into lessons; inkstands and pads for fingers, formulæ, notes. All this is emphatically the prose of school life. Now I would have the class room, if I could, decorated with such pictures, books, busts, and the like, as would help the room in some degree to support the taste for refinement and beauty, history and imagination. I would have the faces of great poets and thinkers looking down upon the student's work. I would have some good books there; such especially as would not only be of practical value, but would give the student an idea of a good edition and a worthy form of publication. I would have some of the great scenes of history and poetry shining before him in works of art; so that entering here he might come out of the sordid, everyday surroundings into a region sacred to higher things.

There is too little of this in our schools; too little of the spiritual and high-minded. And there is perhaps no class room so well calculated to foster this as the class room wherein we think and talk of great writers and their art." ¹

¹ "The Teacher's Outfit in Rhetoric," *School Review*, Vol. III, No. 7, September, 1895.

CHAPTER XV

LITERATURE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL : METHODS OF TREATMENT AND STUDY ; THE BEGINNINGS

THE fact that such works as "The Ancient Mariner," "The Vision of Sir Launfal," "Ivanhoe," "The Last of the Mohicans," which are commonly read in the Elementary School, are among those prescribed for the College entrance examinations, indicates that no hard-and-fast line can be drawn between works especially suitable for either the Elementary School or the High School. As we have said before, some works are universal in their appeal, and speak to the children of all ages. They mean much or little, according to the range of the heart and mind to which they appeal. This fact indicates the only safe point of view from which to approach the problems of method in the High School. A teacher soon discovers that the treatment of "The Ancient Mariner" in the first year of the High School cannot be what it should be in the fourth year, when the student knows more, and is so much riper in judgment and feeling. Hence there are pitfalls in outlining methods applicable to the High School period. Some teachers are misled by elaborate, overedited editions of the prescribed

classics into inflexible methods. Regardless of widely varying conditions, they pay unaltering regard to the same minutiae of editorial scholarship; and so they are lost in details, and slight the large, life-giving features of their work. But the rule of the text-books is impossible, if only because they set such different standards. We could name recent text-books that, by their method of presentation and editorial profusion, are unsuited to any but good fourth year or post-graduate classes; others that are not up to the level of average first-year classes. There must be discrimination here, based on a recognition of the great differences that, in the four years of adolescent growth, distinguish the graduate from the freshman. There are as many ways of dealing with a book as there are phases in human development.

Trying to find a foothold to stay ourselves in our quest for methods adapted to these varying circumstances of the High School period, we may start from these two facts: it is in this period that the average student (there are exceptions) develops a pronounced interest in poetry, feels deeply for the first time the emotional appeal of poetry; and for the first time manifests a keen appreciation of style and an increasing responsiveness to beauty. (Girls are ahead of boys in this respect.) This is what we might deduce from the characteristics of adolescence. The tense, surging emotionalism of youth engenders

a new and respectful feeling for the celestial madness of the poet. Hyperbole comes natural at this time. No language is too extravagant for the spell-bound, ebullient maid and youth. The tropes of a Romeo and a Juliet, who are the fascinating classic types of adolescent perfervidness in speech, are after his manner. And with this acceptance of highly emotionalized speech comes the feeling for style,—the sensuous element in literature,—the ebb and flow of rhythm, the picturesqueness of figure, the heightened color of words.

These emotional developments give us our unique opportunities in the High School. Clearly, to be puttering over philological microscopy, or hedging our students about with dictionaries, encyclopædias, etc., when we can be feeding and developing ethical and æsthetic insight and appreciation, is a fatal mistake. Here is a chance to establish a life-long delight in literary excellence and in communion with the great spirits of the past. To succeed in that must be our master-aim; so that methods must first of all look toward the larger ethical and æsthetic values in literary study. We may now enlist the waxing passion for beauty in behalf of ultimate ethical aims; find new approaches to the true and the good by the avenue of the beautiful. This means that in the study of poetry we must be careful not to damage its essentially poetical quality in our eagerness

to rationalize it, to clear up difficulties of secondary importance, to master the minutiae of allusion and diction. We can afford to emphasize the stylistic element. For example,—to speak of our study of prose,—we shall do well to select chiefly writers whose distinctive qualities of style give interesting individuality to their work; those who, like Macaulay and De Quincey, Stevenson and Lowell, and the masters of impassioned and imaginative oratory like Webster, have obvious and at times exaggerated stylistic traits, rather than those who, although safer as models,—Addison and Goldsmith, Irving, Cooper and Thackeray,—have less striking peculiarities.¹

In this connection we must emphasize the increasing rather than the waning importance of reading aloud as the best means of bringing out the expressiveness of poetry and prose. Whereas, before this time, it has been chiefly the straightforward sing-song of verse and the simpler forms of stanza that have been appreciated, now we note the rapid growth of

¹ The trend of opinion has been steadily in this direction of working for the large ethical and æsthetic values. Compare, *e.g.*, those early Clarendon Press editions of Shakespeare, to which we were many of us so deeply indebted, which deliberately eschew literary or æsthetic annotations, with the most recent American school editions of the plays, say, Professor Katherine Lee Bates's edition of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Leach, Shewell, and Sanborn), the notes of which, divided into Textual, Grammatical, and Literary, give sixty-three pages to the last named and twenty-seven pages to the other two combined.

a power to enjoy the subtler beauties: the variations and irregularities of Shakespeare's, Milton's, and Tennyson's blank verse; the ripe metric art revealed so clearly in "Macbeth"; the involved, climactic phrasings of the Spenserian stanza and the sonnet. It is in close connection with this oral interpretation of masterpieces that we would take up the principles of versification, holding firmly to the point of view that an analysis of verse forms and the scansion of lines are to be purely in the interest of sympathetic and expressive oral rendering. Our scansion must be a scheme of notation indicative of the accent and emphasis, tone and tempo, to be accorded in reading. We shall indicate more definitely what we mean in outlining presently a graded course in versification.¹

And now for the application of these and other related principles. The first year is a year of beginnings, and therefore of cautious and somewhat tentative work. Our plan, with some filling out in connection with the course in composition, will be this: we shall get under way with some short stories, varying in character; pass on to the ballad (the short story in verse) and epic type; then (ringing again the changes upon the differences between prose forms and verse forms)

¹ We may now add Stevenson to those who illustrate the importance of the oral element in developing style. Says his recent biographer, "In his own delicate hearing lay perhaps the root of his devotion to style." Balfour's "Life," Vol. II, p. 193.

take up the novel; and conclude with a play, with its last lessons for the year on the structure of the "tale that is told," in its several varieties of form.

We have often used Hawthorne's "Twice-told Tales" to begin with, because, certain drawbacks notwithstanding, they include conveniently in one volume many well-nigh perfect types of story and sketch, which our students may distinguish, classify, and compare: the monologue-like "Rill from the Town Pump" and the plotless "Toll-gatherer's Day"; the simple incident type, "David Swan," and the more dramatic "Gray Champion"; that masterful study in incident, character, and suggestive meaning, "The Ambitious Guest"; the dramatic allegory, "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment"; the sequence of quasi-historic sketches, "Legends of the Province House," so full of atmosphere and interwoven ethical intention. Another advantage which these stories possess is that some of them reveal the actual process of the writer's creative art; we see, *e.g.*, out of what original materials of fact, and what added, intensifying material of imagination, the "Ambitious Guest" and the "Great Carbuncle" were magically elaborated. In this connection it is easy to interest the student in Hawthorne himself, his personality, and his shy, retired, shadow-haunted life, as he is reflected in some of the stories, and as he discloses himself in his Preface; and if a study of the "House of the Seven Gables" is to follow in the sec-

ond or third years, this will be valuable as preparation and foreground. Also, topical reports may be made upon assigned portions of the Preface to the "Scarlet Letter," upon Hawthorne's "Life and Letters," and sundry magazine articles, especially those on "A Glimpse into Hawthorne's Workshop," and "Hawthorne's Salem," published years ago in the *Century*. It will be well to supplement this exclusively Hawthorne work by a study of two or three short stories of quite different temper and kind,—such, let us say, as Mr. Quiller-Couch's "Roll Call of the Reef," Mr. Davis's Van Bibber Stories, or some of Mr. Kipling's best work,—indeed, there is a wide range of choice from Poe, Harte, Stockton, Howells, Bunner, Hamlin Garland, Miss Jewett, Miss Wilkins, etc.

This work should be simply and quickly and, above all, cleanly done, without dissipating the characteristic atmosphere and suggestiveness of the stories—things that must be *felt*, and recognized, either overtly or tacitly. The main matter in this story work, however, is structure, the anatomy and logic of form in its most obvious aspects, consisting chiefly in a clear perception of what gives unity to each story, of the relation of the parts (episode and incident) to the whole; and of the ways in which effects of expectation and premonition, delay and surprise, climax and catastrophe, are produced. The stories may be assigned sometimes singly (one preparation and recitation will suffice for the

shortest) and sometimes in pairs for comparative purposes. Having been neatly disposed of, they should leave a helpful residuum of notes, outlines, graphic diagrams, summaries, and reports, and, in connection with the composition work, compositions, reductions, imitations, etc., all of which should prove useful for reference purposes later on.

And here we may interpose what we have to say about note-taking. It is very easy to overdo this business; and yet we are not of those who would dispense with notes altogether. The note-book must never be a substitute or maid-in-waiting for the memory, or an aid to cramming: inveterate note-takers injure both memory and the power of intense, sustained attention. It must not be a collection of essays or even of sentences, nor a carry-all of unassorted, unorganized scraps and siftings caught from the teacher's table. It should not wastefully reproduce anything that is in books used or easily accessible. It should be, no less than is a science note-book, a graphic, shorthand presentation of solutions of literary problems, — parallelisms, comparisons, etc. We should lay it down as a general rule, that no notes are to be made for the sake of mere recall, but for the sake of the powers called into play in making them. In their simplest form they should involve some selecting and organizing of data. These data should be organized in such a way as to tell their story by their very appearance, — clear heading and subhead-

ings, and well articulated outlines, — and, be it added, by the absence of fussy and futile rulings and flourishes and beribbonings. The report of a lecture heard should take this outline form, a care for the thought being uppermost, and the thought-relations to be indicated by the form. These expressive outlines, tables, charts, diagrams, maps, and other ingenuities of condensation should be the bulk of the matter in the note-book ; and it should give indications that the individuality of the student has been worked into it. Approximative models or suggestions may be given by the teacher for the various kinds of notes, as the students are called upon to make them. The notes should be inspected from time to time, and appraised chiefly on the score of their convenient brevity and formal expressiveness ; it being the object of the teacher in his corrections and deletions to educate the student's perception of relative values, teaching him to strain away from the salient and focal facts of a subject all the merely savorless and marginal facts.

We must not overlook, however, the value of the mere writing up of rough notes as compelling the student to recall and rethink the living commentary and discussion of the class. That is why we would not prohibit altogether notes on words, idioms, etc., in the works studied. The more or less mechanical work of expanding the hurried jotting or symbol of the moment into a significant note which the student thinks

it worth while, for future serviceableness, to put down, may be made a part of the process of assimilation through reflection. We have found it convenient—in the study of Shakespeare and Milton especially—to get students to classify the most significant words in this wise:—

NOTES ON DICTION

Obsolete	Changed in Meaning or Usage	Differently pronounced	Idioms, etc.
<p>"Merchant of</p> <p>28 Vailing=bowing</p> <p>110 Gear=purpose</p> <p>161 Prest=ready cf. Fr. prêt. =prest.</p> <p>"L'Allegro."</p> <p>12 yclept:=called cf. German "ge-" in past. part.</p>	<p>Venice."</p> <p>17 still=always</p> <p>175 thrift=succes, cf. "thrifty."</p> <p>61 prevented= come before. Cf. Bible use.</p> <p>67 { =counts: cf. "teller" in a bank =total, cf. "tally" and "talesman."</p>	<p>8 o-ce-a</p> <p>54 as-péct</p> <p>138 pierce= like "verse" (still so in N. E. fam- ily name).</p>	<p>144 Child- hood('s) proof</p> <p>185 of my trust</p> <p>33 trip it, cf. "go it" and "stop it."</p>

In the case of Gray's "Elegy" the student may be asked what words or phrases remind him of Milton

(if he has read the shorter poems); or in Goldsmith's poems what words recall the usage of earlier poets, or have changed their meaning in any way since Goldsmith's time.

Studies in plot are tabulated and diagrammed, — *e.g.* the plot of "Silas Marner" in double columned table showing the interplay of the "Marner" and "Cass" threads; that of the "Merchant of Venice" and "As You Like It" in five columns showing to excellent purpose the more complex web of those plots; while the plot of "Macbeth" may be diagrammed after the pyramidal manner adopted by Freytag in his "Technique of the Drama," and followed, after Freytag's pattern, by Miss Woodbridge in her volume on the drama.

So, too, character-groups, pairs, contrasts, foils, are graphically presented in intersecting circles, enchainments, etc., according to the students' preferences and ingenuities. Places associated with authors or works, and journeys like Quentin Durward's, or Milton's or Goldsmith's travels, may be located on outline maps. All such devices, we repeat, should be designed to throw upon the pupil tasks of selecting and organizing his material with scientific purpose. Special attention should be paid to note-taking and note-making in the first year of High School work.

After this necessary digression we may resume the consideration of our main topic, the treatment of the works selected for the first year.

We are now to pass, in our first year's work, from the short story to the epic or narrative poem; but not, let us note, without some work of a descriptive, expository, and critical nature in connection with the study of Hawthorne's life and personality. In this biographical work our principle of progressive development from year to year may be followed; and in it, too, the point to be kept to the fore, in the selection of data, is the relative value of the facts. We shall ask: What events are important in Hawthorne's — Milton's — Gray's — Goldsmith's — life? Why? One biographical formula, we must point out, will not do for all types of life and character: the influences of parentage and place, of nature and books, of society and solitude, of health or sickness, of early education or its neglect, of romance or routine, of ease or hardship, — these influences may count for much or for little; and we must help our students to seize and interpret those dominant characteristics of a person and his career which reflect themselves in the works we examine.

In dealing now with the epic or narrative poem — be it one of Scott's or the Phæacian episodes from the "Odyssey," or Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum" or "Balder Dead" — we shall drive home in new ways the principles of construction studied in the short story; and we shall try to bring out the differences between prose and poetry as vehicles. Here are a few leading questions: What can the poet do, as story-teller

and plot-maker, that the prose writer does not and cannot do? and why? For instance, what liberties may the poet take in the way of descriptive amplifications and digressions? What magic of musical witchery does he employ to check the flow of his story and to detach our interest for a time from the main matter? Why can he impose upon us these catalogues of names, these repetitions, these little asides, these long-drawn similes, these cameos of irrelevant description? Why are we so ready to lend an ear to his — “Ah! that reminds me”? How much is Scott or Homer, Arnold or Morris (if we glance at his “Jason” or “Atalanta’s Race”) or Tennyson given to these things? Let us see what, in Scott’s “Marmion” or “Lady of the Lake,” is of capital plot interest, and what is of subordinate, episodic interest? Where are we delayed? Let us take stock of the nature of these delays — show them in a table or diagram. Where are there musical interludes, as in an opera? Are they worth while? Do they justify themselves?

This is the direction we should take, and how far we shall go in this direction must depend upon circumstances. Can we do anything better than work along these lines to enable the student to get a grip at once on the plot, on character and scenic interest, and on the style of the work? We believe not. These things hang together; they give meaning to one another; they illustrate the **prime** principles of unity and variety in unity, and the

meaning and the limited application of the canon of *Æsthetics*, — that beauty is its own excuse for being, — as nothing else can.

Following these lines, we may consider wherein our treatment of Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel" would differ from that we have suggested in Chapter X for the higher Grammar Grades. We shall work in a larger way. After the first rapid reading in the manner therein indicated, — the vocal rendering of the finer parts by the teacher being the leading feature, — we shall diagram or outline the plot in such a way as to show the firm, clear course of the main story, and the branching of the subordinate episodes, digressions, asides, etc. These we shall discuss. Would we omit or skip any of them? Does this or that one seem to be mere padding, or a freakish indulgence of poetic high spirits? The dull and unappreciative will be for omitting; the more susceptible will insist that this seeming digression is necessary for the light it sheds on the circumstances of the action or on a character, or is a small but indispensable link in the chain of events. This real digression, idyllic or lyric or reflective, is justified by the fact that it restfully lowers the pitch of excitement for a moment, or prepares us the better for the stress that is to follow; while this other we would not dispense with because it is so fine, — "Why, those two lines make it worth while!" And so considerations of structure will lead us on to considera-

tions of style, and exhibit the common-sense logic of style.

This reading of one of Scott's poems might be preceded or followed by a reading of Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum,"—for the sake of its Homeric qualities, its close-knit structure, the splendid crescendo from the hush and first stirrings of the dawn up to the moment when "the noise of battle hurtles in the air;" and the diminuendo down to that last scene of silence and of night. The presence and the significance of Homeric simile, epithet, refrain-like repetitions and enumerations, might be brought out by a little comparative work with a selection from Homer. In fact we should lose no chance to work by comparison: the High School freshman is ready for more advanced work in this direction. For instance, in the study of Bryant's version of the parts of the "Odyssey" before alluded to ("Ulysses among the Phæacians"), we ourselves have found that a comparison of Bryant with Pope, Butcher and Lang, Palmer, and Mackail has helped often to sharpen the appreciation of style in surprising manner. We may add that we like to find an opportunity thus early in the course for a good example of blank verse, to serve as a beginning of our studies and exercises in versification.

Concerning the study of a novel, to follow this work with the narrative poem, not much need be said. The work may be less schematic and detailed than what we

have been doing so far. It will be a change to work from the character side of plot, and to mine the character interest. A few general questions on the plot (Where is the climax? What are the factors in the entanglement? Where is the movement of the story most rapid? Where slowest?) may be followed by character analysis of the hero, heroine, and villain; and then by questions on the style (What is the best description of (*a*) a scene? (*b*) a person in outward presentment? (*c*) a character? How much dialogue is there? When does it come? Does it advance the plot? Has the prose any notable qualities of rhythm? of imagery?), to which we may add any questions as to paragraph or sentence characteristics that may hitch with our composition work.

And now we may quiet down to a short spell of work on the author, Scott, — if it is one of his novels we have been reading. We may read parts of Irving's Essay (the account of his visit to Abbotsford) and some good critical essay (say, Andrew Lang's in his volume of "Essays in Little," which conveniently contains an essay on Dumas). We may work out some preferences — Scott, Henty, Cooper, Dumas, Kingsley — according to the reading of the class.

Finally, we shall reach Shakespeare, — "Julius Cæsar," — if it has not already been read. Let the teacher read it through, with a minimum of comment, to the class; and it will pay to have spared no pains to become pro-

ficient in this task. Professor Corson, in his little book on "The Voice and Spiritual Education" (which with the companion volume on "The Aims of Literary Study" should receive every teacher's careful attention and study), quotes Sir Henry Taylor as saying that he regarded the reading of Shakespeare to boys and girls, if he be well read and they are apt, "as carrying with it a deeper cultivation than anything else which can be done to cultivate them." Experience has proved to us that there is scarcely any exaggeration in these words. There are few gifts, if any, that will atone for the absence in an English teacher of the powers to read Shakespeare well, — we do not mean read him as platform readers do, with great pomp and ceremony; but clearly, with pleasant tone, and good enunciation, and with the feeling, the sincerity, the earnestness, and the artistic conscience that are born of the desire to awaken in young hearers a love of the master. We recall a High School teacher whose pupils, after going in a class to a Christmas reading of the "Christmas Carol" by a justly famous reader, declared that they much preferred their own instructor's way; the moral of which is, we think, that the teacher is able, in the close intimacy and freedom of the class room, to grip the heart and understanding of his class as no platform-artist possibly can.

This first reading of "Julius Cæsar" by the teacher should have left upon his students a deep and lasting

impression of the play in its totality, with the parts in due perspective, of its essentially dramatic and rhythmic features (its rise and fall of emotional emphasis), and of its poetic power. This will provide a basis for the development work that is to follow. First, we shall call for an outline or synopsis of the scenes to reveal the plot. This must be done with utmost brevity in terms of what happens, of action. So we shall develop insight into the first essential of dramatic art: that it is concerned with what men *do* under the stress of temptation, struggle, opportunity. And so we may bring out the differentiae of the drama as compared with the epic, the novel, the short story.

Our second reading, by the class, calling for the memorizing and presentation of selected scenes by the students, will be an exercise in interpretation, and will involve the clearing up of such difficulties in metrics, in words, constructions, and allusions, as stand in the way of such oral rendering and interpretation. This should be our practical test: Do we understand? The teacher may introduce the subject by explaining to the class that the language of Shakespeare's time, while (as they will have noticed) very much like our own, yet had its peculiarities, which sometimes stand in our way (obsolete words and idioms) and sometimes mislead us (changes in meaning and pronunciation). This is obvious in the opening of the first scene. The class may point out the words, — "mechanical," "ought

not walk," "laboring day," "profession," "cobble" (for the pun), "naughty," "knave," "vulgar," etc., — an excellent crop! Well, we must be sure, as we go, that we are not being tripped up in our attempt to decipher what Shakespeare means. The teacher will not press the matter far, but will let the niceties alone. The feeling for Shakespearean English must grow gradually from year to year. The students may tabulate in their note-book (see table on p. 281) twenty salient examples culled from the text. When this second circumspect, interpretative reading is done, we may review the ground covered, and round off our studies in language by working out a few parallelisms (of the teacher's selection) between Shakespeare's English and Bible English — a first step toward a literary study of the Bible (this also in tabular form).

The talk on the metrics — with perhaps a short exercise or two — may come when the first difficulties occur, as they will in the first and second scenes: as *e.g.* the transition from the prose of the "base mechanicals" to the verse of the dignified tribunes, the short lines, the free movement of the verse, the differences of pronunciation (*touché*, *spirit*, *construe*), the presence of rhyme, etc. The motive of such work, we repeat, must be the desire to deliver the lines effectively. One good exercise to test appreciation of rhythm is to require students to divide into lines passages written on the board in lineless prose form. At this point, too,

we may test familiarity with the play by short class exercises, asking by whom certain important lines were spoken.

Now the way is clear for character-study, leading on into the deeper study of the plot, with which it is to some extent involved. This may be by means of problems, or in question form. For example, we may ask: "What mistakes did Brutus make? And what light do they throw upon his character?" Or we may call for a tabular presentation of Cæsar's character (data for a composition) thus:—

QUALITIES OF CHARACTER	EVIDENCE			
	Act	Scene	Line	Words or Incident cited

Or we may ask for a comparative study, in similar form, of Calpurnia and Portia, or a contrast between Brutus and Cæsar.

Lastly, returning to plot again, we may try to master its logic. Here are some of the questions we may put (sometimes the class is equal to only one or two of the simpler of them):—

1. Seeing that Cæsar is killed so early in the play, how is the title to be justified? Is he the hero?

2. Does Cæsar's death mark the climax? If so, how is the interest sustained in the major portion of the play which follows?
3. Why is Scene I a good opening scene? Of what facts and circumstances does it put us in possession? In what state of mind does it leave us?
4. Could we omit the scene with Cinna the poet?
5. What object is served by the scene between Portia, Lucius, and the Soothsayer?
6. Why the scene introducing Cicero, who appears this once only?
7. Why does the Ghost appear to Brutus rather than to Cassius?

Or, if our class is equal to it, we can enumerate (in table) Shakespeare's departures from Plutarch, and try to discover the reason for them.

We have left untouched any discussion of the ethics of the play, and the rhetorical exercises that may grow out of it. These will be incidental for the most part. Such questions as—Was Cæsar's assassination justifiable? Why do we condemn Brutus's suicide?—are sure to arise. Sometimes these problems can be turned over to the debating class. It is in connection also with the work in public speaking and argument that we would deal with the speeches of Brutus and Antony—a comparison of the prose style of the one (why prose?) with the verse style of the other; and an analysis of the parts in their effect upon the audience.

While the many opportunities the play presents for work in Narration, Description, and Exposition will be utilized in connection with the course in Composition, we must use these exercises to help the imaginative grasp of the circumstances and setting of the play. What sort of man was Cæsar to outward view, as Shakespeare presents him?—is an instance. Or we have given as a general topic "A Street Scene in Rome," asking each student to describe as he sees it, vividly in his mental eye, any one street scene in which the populace of Rome share, — that mob whose presence is felt, whose murmur is heard, so continually throughout the play. Various moments of the play will be selected.

We have still to consider how we shall provide for a study of the life and times of Shakespeare, and of other matters connected therewith. We have generally found time for a mastering of the few facts about his life in the first year. In the second year we have placed in our pupils' hands Dowden's "Primer"; and in the third and fourth years have sent them, for amplifications to Lee's *Life*, Dowden's larger work, "Shakespeare, his Mind and Art," Moulton's "Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist"; and have put them in touch, for special purposes, with Hudson's "Shakespeare's Life, Art, and Character," Ward's "English Dramatic Literature," Coleridge's "Lectures on Shakespeare," Halliwell-Phillips' "Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare," and Furness's Variorum Edition of the

plays.¹ We have found it convenient to distribute the topics of this supplementary work thus:—

1st year, Life of Shakespeare.

2d year, The Age of Shakespeare, with special reference to the theatre.

3d year, Periods of his dramatic activity: facts as to folios, quartos, etc.

4th year, His dramatic development: internal evidences chiefly.

In this chapter our outline of the first year's work has been interrupted by a necessary treatment of such topics as note-taking, Shakespearean studies, etc. These we have thought it better to treat incidentally as they arose than to defer for separate treatment elsewhere.

¹ Valuable suggestions to teachers for the advanced studies which it is essential for them to undertake, will be found in the pamphlet, "English in Secondary Schools," by Professors Gayley and Bradley of the University of California (published by the University, at Berkeley).

CHAPTER XVI

LITERATURE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL: METHODS OF TREATMENT AND STUDY (*continued*)

At this pausing point we may remark upon the impossibility of dealing, in a treatise so general in scope as this one, with the manifold problems of High School work. We shall hope to have covered the leading problems; but even this necessitates an exposition so condensed and rapid as to court some danger of confusion.

What we have said about the leading features of the work of the first year renders unnecessary an equally detailed treatment of the work of the three following years. At the beginning of the second year the emphasis shifts from the narrative—that is, preëminently the structural aspect of literary art—to the descriptive—that is, preëminently its color and music, its impressionistic aspect. Wholes are now of less importance: parts of more. We shall aim to get our pupils to see and feel now how a perfectly simple idea can clothe itself or unfold itself in a fascinating manner by means of image, association, and enriched musical language. Milton's "L'Allegro" and "I

Penseroso," Gray's "Elegy," and Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" are all excellent for this purpose, and all of them interest students at this time. Milton is especially good because his pair of poems allow of comparative work, and give us at the same time the beginning of three years' progressive work on Milton. It is partly for these reasons, but even more because of the varied and telling work that may be done with them, that we use them to exemplify our treatment of this type of poem.

First of all, vocal rendering becomes increasingly important; for the beauties of these poems can be revealed to the full only through the lips. Milton's extreme sensitiveness to vocal effectiveness is evident in them in many ways. There is nothing better to be found to illustrate the expressive values of changes in rhythm, accent, and quantity, changes in time and tone, changes from crisp staccato to smooth legato effects.

The poems having been read by the teacher, with enough explanation and discussion to bring into relief the mood that dominates each, and the means by which the contrasting ideas and tempers are bodied forth (the day-time social blitheness of the cheerful man, and the night-time solitary joyousness of the meditative man), the class may at once be set to memorizing and rendering the lines while the cadences are fresh upon the ear. With this will go discussion and elucidation of the metrics and a few metrical exercises, while the

detailed parallelisms and contrasts will be brought out. In the former we shall do justice, (1) to the lovely change from the harsh and trailing lines of the introductory dismissal, to the light and flowing lines of the invitation to the "godesse fair and free," or, in "Il Penseroso," to the richer, graver, fluted tones of the address to the "godesse sage and holy"; (2) to the frequent changes in the lines from the iambic to the trochaic accent (to put the matter in ordinary terms); (3) to the exquisite modulation of the tempo (noticeably through the differences in vowel values), as when, in the midst of caprice-like daintiness of the —

"Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe,"

we have the *rallentando*, the slower, fuller-vowelled, monosyllabic movement, the firmer tread, the check of a touch of the poet's reserved seriousness, with —

"And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty,"

a slight but very significant out-cropping of the poet's spiritual passion, which the student will later appreciate when he follows the steady, heroic march of the master toward that goal of freedom which is registered in the series of poems that closes with "Lycidas."

The parallelisms and contrasts may conveniently be registered in some such manner as this:—

LINES	"L'ALLEGRO"	LINES	"IL PENSEROSO"
1-10	Dismissal, — of Melancholy.	1-10	of deluding joys.
11-46	Invitation to Mirth.	11-54	to Melancholy.
47-150	Progress of day of social delights.	55-174	of night of solitary joys.
42	(a) Lark's Reveille —	56	(a) Evening.
44	(b) "Dappled Dawn," cock, hounds, etc.	67	(b) Nightingale's even-song.
60	(c) Sunrise.	74	(c) Moonrise.
	(d) Sounds of labor. (It will be well to quote the lines.)		(d) Curfew.

Or we may include such details as the following: —

Descent of Mirth: — Venus and Bacchus: Youth and Jollity; or Milton's own = Zephyr and Aurora: the lightsome west-wind and the spirit of morning. Mirth = a nymph. Her companions: etc., etc.	of Melancholy: Vesta and Saturn; that is, Domestic Quiet and Solitari- ness. Melancholy = a nun. Her companions:
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Then we may deal more thoroughly with the descriptive features of the verse, — in pause, word, phrase, figure, and imagery; in alliterative and onomatopoeic effects; in mental picture and sensuous musical quality.

Afterward, we may reach behind the poems to the poet: What kind of personality is it that expresses itself thus in two such moods? Is it a rich, large one? a nature-loving one? book-loving? music-loving? theatre

haunting? By what is it attracted in nature? By sights or sounds or odors? by color or motion? near or distant landscape? Are there evidences of fine observation? Think of some other poet's way of looking at Nature. What are his intellectual interests? his favorite authors? And this may lead to looking up and capturing the facts as to Milton's early life up to the Horton period.

The opportunities for descriptive composition in connection with the poem are as many as the teacher is inclined to utilize.

As to what should follow this work on Milton, we shall be guided by the outcome of what we have done, and the state of mind in which we find the class. Sometimes it is desirable to catch a deeply-aroused interest in this type of literature by passing on at once to the "Deserted Village," or Gray's "Elegy"; or (striking a contrast between the Miltonic and the modern romantic) to pass to Byron's "Childe Harold" or Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes,"—which has the attractiveness of a narrative interest along with its tapestried richness of descriptive beauty. Or it may be the nature-side of the poems that has kindled interest; and we may catch this wave, and also make a desirable change to prose by taking an essay or two by Burroughs or another, or some of the nature poems in Syle's volume. Or we may take up Stevenson on the descriptive side, with "Travels with a Donkey" or "An

Inland Voyage" for text, and a plentiful supplement of descriptive matter drawn from his essays and sketches. The state of the work in Composition will, of course, be a factor in our choice. That may have revealed a special weakness in observation, or what not, which it may be well to strengthen by intensive study of those authors who are especially strong in this quality.

These ends, along with others, may indeed be pursued by turning at once to fiction, — to "Silas Marner" or "Lorna Doone," both strong in descriptive power. The scene at the Rainbow in the former will be a pendant to the cottage tale-telling scene in "L'Allegro," and will help us in an inventive effort to elaborate that scene, and present the credulous peasantry of the seventeenth century. "Lorna Doone" transports us back almost to the very period, and its profuse description will give us copious material for analytical and imitative work.

Of these two works, "Silas Marner" will afford us the better opportunity to carry forward our studies of fictitious narrative. Novel reading is such a large factor in our modern life and culture, that it is worth while to help our students to adopt proper standards and cultivate a sound taste in their choice of fiction. "Silas Marner" forms an excellent bridge from the Scott type of the fiction of adventure to the modern novel of character problems and of sociological import. Let it be read at home, and reviewed in some rapid

way in the class. We have found the plan of requiring the class to invent good titles to the chapters effective; this exercise provokes profitable discussion of the question as to what are the salient points of the story. Then the plot may be diagrammed as suggested on page 282, and the central, unifying idea of the story brought out. It will be well then, with the plot diagram before us, to go over the book chapter by chapter, scrutinizing more carefully the part each plays in relation to the main idea. A good many interesting questions may be put in this connection, *e.g.*:—

What periods of time elapse in the story? Give references.

What object is served by introducing Sally Oates in Chapter II?

What is Dolly Winthrop's part in the development of the plot?

Would the story suffer by cutting out the confab at the Rainbow?¹ etc.

The problems of character will follow; and the more trenchantly they are put, the better. For example, we may ask, concerning Miss Nancy: Would she, in our estimate of her, have refused Godfrey Cass if she had known of his first marriage? There will remain such questions as to language and style, time and place

¹ Teachers will receive valuable help in pressing this side of their work from the notes to Mrs. Colby's edition of "Silas Marner" (Appleton).

interest, the author and her works, the dominant ethical problems of the play,—fate and character, retribution and expiation,—as are in order according to the plane of the class in intelligence and cultivation. The class may be asked to cull four or five of the profoundest reflections on the graver problems of life. With girls, at least, it is easy to arouse a deep interest in the personality and literary career of George Eliot.

We have still, according to our plan, the “*Idylls of the King*” and the “*Merchant of Venice*” to provide for. We may interpose, if time allows, something of the essay kind,—Lamb or Bacon, Ruskin or Carlyle (a chapter from “*Heroes*”). We have sometimes read, in order to play into the hands of the composition work, Poe’s essay on the Poetic Principle; and have developed the æsthetics of literary description as compared with the descriptive powers of the space arts. This work, however, had better be considered in connection with the course in Composition and Rhetoric.

Of the treatment of the “*Idylls*” and the “*Merchant*,” little need here be said: it will follow the lines laid down for the first year work with the narrative poem and with “*Julius Cæsar*.” Tennyson’s epic will give us a rare chance to follow out our distinctions between prose and poetry by using Malory’s prose version for comparative purposes; it will introduce us to a more complex and ornate form of blank verse; above all it will give food for thought and investigation

by reason of the separate problems or ideas that are worked out in each self-sufficient section of the poem, and the great underlying problem of the whole in both its direct and its symbolic meaning. But the main thing is close, sympathetic contact with Arthurian romance, with its high, chivalrous ideals, and its by-paths up into those high altitudes of Celtic legend and heroism of which mention has already been made. Mere contact with this world is a great education; and Tennyson gives it such rich emblazonry, and presents its heroic figures with such noble gait, that it ought to contribute a deep and lasting element to the spiritual enlargement of our students. It will be well to draw upon other poets to supplement Tennyson here and there,—an Arthurian poem or two by Morris, or Arnold's "Tristram and Iseult."

In the third year we exploit a new vein, in connection with the attempt to conquer the principles and art of exposition. We pass from the romantic to the classic mode; from the masters of imagination and inspired spontaneity, to the masters of a more deliberative and calculating temper. Our programme, we may recall (see page 266), is to begin with Dryden and Pope, and to pass on to the study of Addison's and Steele's prose as the ripe fruit of the new tendency toward an easier, more lucid, and more measured prose style. From the expository manner—equable, unagitated—we may proceed to expository

method; then — because it will follow naturally upon our readings in the “Spectator” — we may take Macaulay’s “Essay on Addison,” a fairly good example of the biographical order, which will give us work in structural analysis that will be valuable.

Without being slavishly governed by the needs of our expository work in Composition, we may indirectly and directly contribute to that work. To live in the atmosphere of the period from 1650–1750, — the Age of Reason, Common Sense, Prose, — will, in itself, be helpful. We shall be studying the new critical and self-conscious spirit which owed much to French influence, in the Epistles of Dryden and Pope (the “Essay on Criticism” or “Essay on Man”); in some of the “Spectator” papers — *e.g.* on “Party Politics,” “The Overcrowding of the Learned Professions,” “On Country Manners”; and, if we revert to an earlier type for the sake of comparison, one or two of Bacon’s Essays. Here will be plenty of opportunity to study how an idea or given line of thought may be worked out, and to realizing that, whereas in narration and description there are conditions and props to guide us (sequence in time, relations in space, etc.), in the expository type of writing we must rely solely on the logic of thought-connection, — on definition, proportion, restraint. Here is a craftsmanship that is governed by cautious, ingenious planning, and calls for clearness in procedure and

expression, — a Popean neatness and appositeness, an Addisonian limpidity and ease. Such are the virtues we shall strive to discover and appreciate, and to embody in turn in our own attempts.

But this aim is not to deflect us from our chief concern, — that of getting our students to understand and enjoy each work according to its proper and peculiar excellences, the compact sententiousness and trenchant aphoristic quality of Dryden's and Pope's epistles; the fine-mannered, delightful characterization of the "Spectator" papers, their vivid recall of the London and the rural England of good Sir Roger's days, their telling, good-natured criticism of the foibles of the time.

"Don't you find your students very much bored by the 'Spectator' papers?" asked a distinguished academic visitor to our class room. We have heard this question frequently put. We know that in some cases the doubt has been justified; but these were cases in which the papers were mishandled. Sometimes they have been read too early in the first year; at others, too clumsily. They may be made a delightful experience to boys and girls of the third or fourth year. How? By hearty, appreciative reading, (1) creating for heart and mind the engaging, the urbane and gracious, if quaint, personality of Sir Roger, and of the good baronet's friends, taciturn Mr. Spectator, garrulous Will Wimble, and the rest; (2) re-

constructing, with amplification from other sources, the social and literary life of London,—its clubs and coffee-houses, its street scenes, theatres, amusements; and (3) similarly reviving for the imagination the country scenes and customs of Old England. It is most important to add Sir Roger to the beloved book-friends of our circle; to enjoy his simple humanity, quiet considerateness, and childlike frankness.

We may open up these large avenues of interest at the outset; and as we read the papers (some in class, but most at home), collect our data, to be arranged later in outline form. In introducing the papers to our class we may strike the key-note by inviting them to make acquaintance with one of the very few perfect gentlemen of fiction—as he has been called. (Can they think of any others?) Will they agree with that verdict? If so, by virtue of what qualities? As we read we shall note any felicities, run down difficult words and allusions, and try to follow the easy flow of the style,—which, when we have concluded our study, we may try to imitate by inventing a new short “Spectator” dissertation of our own.

Of supplementary work there may be as much as one will,—browsings in the “Spectator” at large, with expository summaries of any numbers that may especially strike the fancy; in Steele’s letters; in Thackeray, Dobson, and other writers who have

thrown enhancing light on the men and the epoch. There may be a map of old London, with coffee-houses, theatres, etc., located. Our literary map of England and Ireland, which we keep on hand and enlarge as new data occur, will be added to; and our chronological tables brought down to Addison's dates.

If we pass on at once to Macaulay's "Essay on Addison," all matters connected with the lives of both Addison and Steele may be taken in connection with that. An effective way of dealing with it and with all works of its kind, as we have found, is this:—

1. Teacher's Introduction: the foreground. Macaulay and his Essays. The Great Reviews and Reviewers.
2. Reading of Essay: so many pages assigned; the student required to underline neatly in pencil the topic matter of each paragraph; the text discussed so as to assure a mastery of the main points.
3. The structure of the whole essay to be shown in a detailed outline; this involving a second reading, conquering smaller details of allusion, etc.
4. This outline made the basis of a development of detail in topical treatment: (a) The course of Addison's life, especially his political fortunes (involving main facts as to political changes); (b) His literary development and works; (c) His literary friendships and connections, especially

his relations with Steele, Pope, and Swift; (*d*) His character; Macaulay's bias; unfairness to Steele (cf. Thackeray's estimate), etc.

5. The technique of the Essay: management of two strands: —

- I. Addison's life, and the political life of his time, and
- II. Addison's works and their qualities; and, lastly,
- III. Paragraph structure: echoes. Sentences: echoes — Diction — Rhythm — Imagery. Proportion: masses; interruptions and digressions.

As to what shall follow these studies, must again depend upon circumstances. Several alternatives suggest themselves: (1) we may take up briefly the biography of Macaulay (a knowledge of it is required for College entrance), and use freely Trevelyan's entertaining "Life and Letters"; or (2) we may, by way of a contrasting study, read Carlyle's "Essay on Burns"; or (3) we may take a new departure from Macaulay's suggestion that in the De Coverley papers we have the beginnings of the modern novel, and read the "Vicar of Wakefield" in the line of evolution, or "Esmond," or "The Newcomes," or another; or (4) we may make a thorough change, and introduce here our third Shakespeare play, — "Midsummer Night's Dream," "As You Like It," "Twelfth Night." An excursion into the field of biographical literature, which shall give an intimation of the really great biographies and auto-

biographies, will be of great value, if we can make it; so that much may be said for work in (1) or (2). Any of these four studies will be treated after the manner already suggested for the novel or the play; although, of course, there will be some variations, some abbreviating of steps, some advance beyond the steps taken in dealing with former instances. Also we shall have found room for a study of Webster in the course in oratory and debate, — which will come well toward the end of the term, so as to lead on in the beginning of the fourth year to Burke's Speech on "Conciliation."

Thus our fourth year will open then. The treatment of Burke's Speech will resemble that of Macaulay's "Essay on Addison"; only that, as it implies the personal presence of the orator, the scenes and circumstances of the delivery, — historical setting, audience, the issues at stake, — it will involve the taking of a different point of view. Certain imaginative exactions have to be made. Moreover, here we have a great unitary argument; a sort of necessary progression of ideas, — the pressing forward, as with an army of ideas on the march, toward a beleaguered citadel.

We shall begin by reviewing the facts leading up to the delivery of the speech, — facts of American and English history. The student must have a sense of Burke's effort being, from the English point of view, an attempt made, "on the eve," to avert a great disaster; from the point of view of actual occurrences in the Colonies, a

pathetic, tragic effort "after the event." This done, we shall begin to read the speech aloud; but once well under way, and the imaginative illusion of speaker and audience secured, we shall dispense with the vocal reading of a great part of it, selecting those passages which patently involve speaker and audience. Each recitation will begin with a summary of what has been read up to date; when the argument, having been resumed, may be carried forward clearly. The topic of each paragraph will be indicated either by underlining or by written condensation (*précis*). Then a brief will be drawn, showing, besides the careful subordinations of primary, secondary, and tertiary strata in the argument, the broad divisions—introduction, announcement of position and thesis, exposition of data, etc. It is a great mistake, we think, to relieve the student of any part of this work by editorial aids; and we would strongly urge the importance of using a text-book that does not offer these weakening crutches. We know that this is a stiff piece of work, but it is very much worth while. It is in connection with this elaboration of the brief that we shall consider the subject of argument and the syllogism generally, and their leading types; shall take a large outlook over the speech, its logical unity or the absence of it, its proportion, its varying emphasis and climax. Then will follow a detailed study of the parts, as these are set forth in the brief, involving a clearing up of all facts and allusions,

including a comprehension of the leading data as to the British Constitution and parliamentary organization and procedure; then a study of the style, literary allusions, and reminiscences; and finally a closer study of Burke, his personality and career, and his other American speeches, — conveniently brought together for us by Professor George (see Heath's edition).

This may cost at least two months of steady work, at the rate of three recitations a week (not including parallel composition work in Argumentation). It is not too high a price to pay. Rapid, slipshod work on such a masterpiece is a folly, an impertinence. We must give the mind time enough to become saturated with it, to react naturally upon it. How great a service may be done to our students, we may better realize if we recall Mr. John Morley's words concerning the three speeches on American affairs, that they are "the most perfect manual in all literature for the study of great affairs, whether for the purpose of knowledge or action," — great by reason of "the vigorous grasp of masses of compressed detail, the wide illumination from great principles of human experience, the strong and masculine feeling for the two great political ends of Justice and Freedom, the large and generous interpretation of expediency, the morality, the vision, the noble temper." And concerning Burke himself: "There are great personalities like Burke who march through history with voices like a clarion trumpet and some-

*thing like the glitter of swords in their hands. They are as interesting as their work. Contact with them warms and kindles the mind."*¹

We have scant opportunity to speak about the other features of the fourth year work. We should pass on now to "Macbeth," gathering together, with the aid of the notes taken in the three preceding years (an important function of these notes), the large threads of our Shakespearean studies. The work may be less formal, and more abbreviated, — although we would not omit the oral reading of the play, because the ear should be amply accustomed to the free, irregular rhythms and long, large swell of the verse. If we can get our students to apprehend and feel the high seriousness of the play (to use Arnold's terms), the grand style of the verse, the amplitude of the treatment, by way of bringing home the greatness of the issues involved and the large-limbed nature and carriage of Macbeth, — we shall have done the best of good service. The plot may be diagrammed, as we have already suggested, by means of the pyramidal figures employed by Freytag; and there may be a close study of the act and scene structure, the subtle, dramatic patterning of the play. The study in this respect, and also in its supreme interest, — the character development of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, — may easily lead the enthusiastic teacher into depths beyond the reaches of

¹ "On the Study of Literature," in "Miscellaneous Studies."

youthful souls. We must be on our guard against this, and feel our way with tact, suggesting rather than grappling with the ultimate ethical issues involved.

The space-limits imposed upon us in this volume, which we already begin to overstep, prevent our going into further details, and necessitate a brief treatment of remaining features of the work of the fourth year.

After the gloom of the great tragedy it will be a happy change to emerge into the sunlight of Milton's "Comus," and enjoy the strains of the pastoral flute and Thyrsis' madrigal. We can make a transition by an excursus on the subject of the history of the drama and the theatre in England, and the rise of the masque. To insure appreciation at once of the lyric blitheness of "Comus," and of the chastened austerity of the high argument in behalf of Virtue, is no easy task. We must not worry the text; there must be a spirit of reserve and delicacy in our handling: plenty of reading, of memorizing, of declamation; and just as much work on the text as is necessary to make it generally intelligible. Let the teacher select the most important points, and see that these are well comprehended. Then we should refer back to "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," and note Milton's growth, especially in the treatment of Nature. Then "Lycidas" may follow, to be treated in the same reserved but

admiring fashion. Happy the teacher who can evoke any adequate response in young hearts from so rare a product of the highest poetic workmanship! If he can lodge its lovelier elegiac harmonies in the memory of his students, if he can make it sing itself and its pictures and images,—the high lawns, Lycidas' laureate hearse, the train of mourning figures, the wash of the sounding seas,—so that it may become something of a touchstone of excellence when recalled in later years, he will have done better than well.

Macaulay's "Essay on Milton" may follow, to be treated after the manner of the "Essay on Addison," and the remainder of our time given to one or other of the rounding-out studies suggested in Chapter XIV.¹ We would not be more definite and prescriptive. We have insisted upon the value of plans, and we have nothing to retract on that score in relation to High School work. But while we do well to plan each year's work beforehand, and a scheme of treatment for each book studied, we must be ready to modify these to suit the unexpected development or lack of development on the part of our students. Sometimes we shall linger more than we had arranged to do over this or that piece of work; it will seem worth while with some sets of pupils: at other times we shall run up against dead spots and hurry on.

It all comes back to the necessity of preserving the

¹See pages 268-9.

personal element, keeping the personal touch delicate, and the personal sympathy sensitive at this stage of the work. To be impersonal and general in it, to allow the pupil to escape beyond the radius of heart-to-heart and mind-to-mind contact, is to fail.

CHAPTER XVII

COMPOSITION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

WE shall not in this chapter cover ground already traversed in our chapters on composition in the Primary and Grammar Grades, but, taking for granted the leading principles affecting composition advanced in those chapters, shall try to meet the new circumstances and demands that arise in the High School. What changes in method of attack and in the development of plans are called for, now that we have the adolescent to deal with? Generally, it may be said that the vital distinction between this stage and the preceding stages of our work is that, whereas the emphasis has hitherto been strong upon habituation and uniformity, in the High School stage a new reliance is put upon conscious freedom or self-regulation, and upon developing individual differences and preferences. We have to deal with students who, while much more critical than pupils of the pre-adolescent period, are nevertheless much more accessible and mouldable, much more readily and deeply inspired, than their juniors. In the English work the most important developments are of those nascent emo-

tions referred to in an earlier chapter, — a feeling for style and a capacity for appreciating poetry.

The first essential of real success in composition work is to make proficiency in it seem worth while to our students. This does not mean getting up a sensational interest in the work. It does not mean cockering the whims, the passing moods, and flying interests of the student. Nor does it mean working by the fashionable recipe that school is, not a preparation for life, but life itself, — a doctrine that too easily tends to sap the vitals of youth and to work havoc among us. The pupil knows better. He discriminates between the life of adult self-direction and vocation which is ahead of him, and the necessary preparation for that life. This preparation will seem worth while, and will even be "good sport" to him, for all its austerities, provided the end is appreciated and the teachers trusted. In this field, as in the field of athletics, the student takes his seat at the training table to make ready for a contest that is ahead. He is doing what others think it right that he should do, to attain ends he cannot fully foresee or appraise. Humility is required of him, and trustful obedience. Let him feel that the wisdom of the ages and the sages — the long experimentation and gathering tradition of centuries — is behind him; and that respect for his elders and betters is his first lesson. He is not in school primarily to please himself; he is there to fulfil his rational human destiny, as his elders

interpret it. He is there for work; and he is fortunate if, in doing that work, he gets (as well he may, — and should) a sense of the worth-whileness of it that is a joy and a satisfaction to him.

The moral of these reflections is, that the English teacher will do a great wrong to his students unless his labors with them are touched by something of a spirit of austerity, requiring a serious, self-denying girding of the loins. One may so easily follow the fashion of going too eagerly in quest of the student's so-called "interest," especially at a time when he is prone imperiously to assert them. We have too frequently seen the debilitating effects of such concessions. Instead, it is rather a teacher's business, — sometimes to create interests; sometimes to starve them. His point of view, which he must help his students to take with him, is that of the race and the ages; his outlook, that of civilization and its needs. It is his business to lift his students out of narrow and narrowing grooves of interest, to keep open, as Herbart puts it, the circle of their ideas, and to expand that circle. It is his business to tone his students up with a manly zest, so that they may regard the tasks assigned to them as so many challenges, — ay, as foes resolutely to be wrestled with, if you will. And this attitude does not involve any repression of individuality, which every good teacher rejoices to recognize and foster; it merely means safeguarding true individuality against premature and one-

sided expression; against wilfulness and self-indulgence.

An attitude of this sort is quite consistent with a recognition of the varied incentives to effort that ought to count in English work. There is the utilitarian incentive,—the practical importance of the art of the ready writer; its sheer business value. With one type of student—of the poorer sort undoubtedly—this will have considerable weight; but it should yield to higher motives. There will be no heartiness in work done under its merely prospective influence. It may be supplemented by an appeal to the social motive, to *amour propre*,—an appeal that may be most effectively made indirectly by the quiet assumption that refined speech is an indispensable part of good manners and gentle breeding, the safest passport into cultivated society. While this may be preached sometimes from the teacher's desk, it is to be felt chiefly through the teacher's own example and personality; through the spirit and atmosphere of the work. Goodness, as some one has said, is self-diffusive; and so it is with good manners;—they are self-commending; and the teacher who has them, perforce diffuses them.

But these motives to taking pains must not stand in the way of a third,—the princeliest of them all,—a craftsman-like pleasure in the work itself. Nothing less will satisfy the good teacher; he must rouse the linguistic conscience and artistic spirit. To excel in

the work must be a point of honorable and cherished ambition. The boy or girl must be happy, his classmates and, above all, his teacher must be happy, over any good piece of language work turned out from the literary shop or workroom, as over any admirable piece of work turned out from the art studio or the machine shop. This or that deft piece of narrative or ingeniously-wrought story; this or that graphic description, flashing a place or a personality upon the mind; this or that crystal-clear exposition or irresistible argument, — should provoke admiration and delight just as an effective piece of wood-carving or bent iron-work or beaten brass does. And it may. We speak out of personal experience in a Manual-training School, where the good literary craftsman was frequently followed in his work with the interest with which the craftsman in wood or iron was followed at the bench or forge; where literary products were overhauled with something of the curiosity and pride shown in overhauling the products of the arts and crafts.

Speaking with no sentimental yearning toward academic Utopia, but on the basis of actual experience and groping effort, we say deliberately that the trouble with much of our work is that it is too coarsely and too clumsily done. It lacks atmosphere; it is not pursued either broadly or finely enough, in the spirit of the craftsman. Anything like delight in the making and using of linguistic products is absent from it. The

spirit surrounding it is rather that of the factory, where certain marketable, machine-made products are made. Rules for good conduct are posted, with a list of fines and penalties. Some of our teachers and textbooks speak as if a boy may be drilled and harried into clearness and correctness of speech, as he may be into punctuality or cleanliness. But the important habit of punctuality, if we succeed in establishing it, is a very different matter from a continuing passion for taking pains in self-expression; a continuing scrupulousness, not only to make ourselves understood and to square our expression with our thought, but to carry conviction, and to do justice to our own feelings and ideals. We are dealing with character in a broader and deeper way, not only to initiate and establish fixed habits, but to generate tendencies, — a certain consecutive bent of the nature.

It is true that the teacher of Composition may achieve a certain kind of business success in getting his pupils to write in an orderly and correct and wooden manner, and that he may force the pace in gaining this end; but he will miss the larger educational and disciplinary values in Composition work if he is controlled by this aim. The more or less mechanical results which he achieves may be obtained just as well, or better, by the way, in pressing forward to the greater ends. In the one case, we produce a correct but probably disaffected writer; in

the other, with less violent and hurried assault upon carelessness, disorder, and haste, we produce the boy who has something of a way of putting things,—something of a relish and pride in the felicities of his writing. The broader method involves a realization on the teacher's part of the fact that *what he has on his hands in attempting to make of a student a good writer is, first of all, a character, and only secondarily an intelligence and an aptitude.* How if, by his rude daily demand for perfunctory work, his curt "stand and deliver," he should have undermined the finer forces of character,—the love of order, of power, of beauty, of fairness and courtesy,—all of which are involved in the effort to be correct and effective in one's speech?

We shall never get our students to assume the proper attitude toward their work in Composition and Rhetoric unless we can make them feel that in striving for the art of self-expression, they are striving for self-comprehension, self-mastery, and self-origination. We must bring home to them the fact, speaking now in more technical terms, that work in description or narration involves much more than mere observance of the rules of grammar and rhetorical construction; that it is at once a training of the eye to see, the mind to discriminate its objects and its impressions, the heart to report its feelings of beauty and delight, the conscience and memory to be

true to fact; and, similarly, that in exposition and argument they are called upon to do justice to a thesis or idea; to be scrupulous in the presentation of facts; to respect their foes, and be at pains to appreciate a foeman's point of view; and to gain their point fairly by the power of fact, of logic, of truth. It is for these reasons, among others, that we agree heartily with Professor Genung when he says:—

“I have always regarded rhetoric as dealing, in all its parts and stages, with real literature in the making, and composition, however humble its tasks, as veritable authorship, well meant and conscientious. There is no mystery in the literary art or mood which is not present in germ in the efforts of the schoolboy as he writes about the objects of his youthful interest; the difference lies merely in the different stages of mental development and skill. . . . To put the student frankly on the basis of authorship, and respect him accordingly, to impose upon yourself, as his guide and model, a corresponding standard of achievement and culture, is to impart immensely greater reality to his study of rhetoric, and to help him realize, what is the truth, that his exercises in words and sentences are concerned, not with what will soon be superseded, but with constructive principles that must accompany his work to his life's end.”

And now for some of the practical consequences of our position, with its stress upon the importance of

working, in the spirit of refined artisanship, for character development through self-expression.

If in the class room and conference room we are intent upon these larger values — character values and æsthetic values in conjunction; if we are working for the clear, observing eye, for large, bold ways of conceiving things, for fineness and resonance of sensibility, for moral insight and scrupulousness, — this must mean a liberal amount of individual work with our students; and this means small classes and frequent personal conferences between pupil and teacher. Squad-drill in Composition should be out of the question in High School work. We speak, not with the bias of the specialist, but from the Principal's point of view, when we urge that in no department of the High School will it pay so well to be liberal in the provision of teachers and the limitation of the size of classes as in the English work. The influence a good English teacher may have through effective personal work (as distinguished from hurried squad-work) in the class room, and through the still greater intimacy of the private conference, is incalculable. We will be more definite.

First of all, the work in the class room must permit of much reading aloud of the written work. Every student should be called upon at least twice a month — when, he will not know beforehand. Our classes must not be so large as to preclude this. The semi-

nar method will be approximately followed, more particularly in the third and fourth years. In the class criticism the note of positive appreciation will lead, and fault-finding come afterward. The teacher will say: "Sewell, that was well conceived, strongly welded together; or that was finely or sturdily felt, or it had life and movement. What a pity that certain flaws in the workmanship bothered us! You repeated yourself there, and weakened your effect. There you bungled or missed a strong antithesis. You were ambiguous or confused in one place. You threw us off the scent by an irrelevancy. You misused a word. It was clear, from your confusion in reading at such a point, that you had not punctuated. You must not allow these things to discount your good effects."

It is after the papers have been handed in that the teacher, in the privacy of the conference room, will find that opportunity kindly to rebuke and rally which delicacy denied to him in the publicity of the class room. "Your work is full of feeling—a valuable asset; but it is seriously discounted by mental incoherence. See here and here." Or, "Your work indicates a failing that will cripple you through life, if not battled with; you are carelessly inaccurate. Things are not as you represent them. Either you have not been conscientious enough to look closely and patiently at your object, or you have not been at pains to find

words for what you saw. Your loose use of words implies either indolence or a crude, slap-dash way of thinking." Or, again, "Your letter to your friend was dashing, but a trifle self-magnifying or lacking in considerateness; and see, he will be obliged to read this passage twice, because the absence of punctuation marks or this ambiguity will puzzle him." There is no need to enlarge upon the deep impressions for good that may be made upon a student by means of these friendly and intimate talks over the "business" of writing. A boy's or girl's work in Composition opens innumerable doors into the heart and mind and conscience.

The next point to be insisted upon in the organization of the Composition work is that of giving practical effect to a view generally taken by good teachers, but too seldom acted upon,—that students shall be expected in any written work done in the High School (and we would add oral work, were that possible) to live up to the standards exacted by the English Department, and that they shall in some way be held to account for their shortcomings. We know too well the difficulties in the way of putting this pious theory into practice. The special teachers have no time,—frequently have no inclination,—sometimes no skill, to enforce the rule. On the other hand, it is not possible that all written work should pass muster before the English Department. What then? Shall the effort be altogether

abandoned as impracticable? Not at all; the matter is too important. We must consider it more carefully.

As we have said in an earlier chapter, the important requirement is that whenever the student is engaged in the act of composition, — that is, whenever he is expressing himself, — he must feel bound to be accurate in his way of saying things, whatever the subject may be or whatever the nature of the exercise he is engaged upon. More injurious, perhaps, than anything else to a student's powers of expression, is the distinction he draws between the work done for the English Department as a set exercise in Composition, and work done for the history teacher or the classics teacher, as the case may be, to test his knowledge. The student thereby sets up two linguistic standards, and develops two linguistic selves. He sets off the work in Composition as something apart, — something in which peculiar endeavor and a special scrupulousness are expected. In some schools so much written work is required, that it is impossible that it should be well or even carefully done. The Composition teacher is apt to forget that, in addition to his own special written work, the students have many written tasks for other teachers. It is quite as important, indeed it is more important, that these should be creditably done, than that the Composition work of the English Department should be. Far better were it in such circumstances for the English teacher to say to his class: "To-morrow you have an account of

the battle of Thermopylæ, or the Roman Prætorship, to write for your history teacher; I have arranged with him that this essay shall serve the purpose also of the English Department." Or, again, "I find that to-day you had a written review or test in Cicero, and that it included the translation of a passage from the '*De Senectute*.' The Latin teacher will hand the papers to me, after he has seen them, and I shall go over them from the point of view of the specialist in English." Other ways of dealing with the problem may suggest themselves; but the point here insisted upon is, that, somehow or other, the students must feel that the English Department does concern itself with the work done in all departments, by way of enforcing the general principle stated above. It may be by descending at times upon the several departments in turn, and gathering a select crop of papers; or by making special arrangement for periodical returns from each. It has been our good fortune to work with teachers in other departments with whom there was an understanding in this regard. We would receive from them weekly, or less frequently, papers that obviously required attention from the English Department; and, at stated intervals, batches of papers from the whole class, for supplementary criticism on the language side. The least that the English teacher can do is to keep informed as to what written work his classes are doing in other departments, and what problems in expression

it presents. One other point in this connection ; that is, the importance of establishing uniform requirements in all departments as to the form and quality of written work, — paper and ink, headings, margins, indorsements, etc.

It is at this juncture that, casting an eye over the sum of written work that is being done by our students, we find ourselves involved once more in a recognition of the fact that they are continually called upon to produce compositions of all kinds, — narrative, descriptive, expository, argumentative. Returns from other departments will bring this out. From this it follows that, in attending to one particular kind of composition and a special set of problems at one time in the English Department, we cannot exclude altogether some attention to the other kinds and to general problems. The necessity of having a method, and of achieving a progressive and methodical conquest of the difficulties of writing, will involve us in placing an emphasis for the time being upon this or that kind. Such particularization in the English field may be likened to intensive work upon special periods in the field of History. A certain large and general view of the whole subject is taken for granted, while step by step a closer and more careful view and treatment of a certain part of the field is gained. It is well to remember also that before our students reach the High School, they have been workers in the field at large, and may have worked intensively upon some parts of it.

Allowing, then, for the fact that, while engaged upon the intensive cultivation of a particular species of composition, we have these larger aims to pursue, we may elaborate our plan of dealing successively in three or four years of our course with the four species, — Narration, Description, Exposition, and Argument. We would begin at once with the work of writing short, and, at intervals, lengthier narratives — incidents of personal life, stories remembered, episodes from books of travel, adventure, and biography; reductions of long stories, novels, and poems. There are those who prescribe a year of introductory work — partly review, and partly a survey of general principles governing Composition in general; some grammatical considerations; rules as to choice of subject, diction, sentences, paragraphs, etc. We have put this plan to the proof, and have found it less successful than the one we now advocate. In the first place it does not give that sense of a fresh beginning which is so important. Let our students feel now that their Composition work is to be done on a higher plane, — on the basis of rhetorical principle. Explain what Rhetoric means; bring home the distinction between it and Grammar. Let them feel that a working knowledge of Grammar is to be presupposed — however sorely some of them may need brushing up in it.

This method of procedure does not mean, however, that we shall at once begin to load up with

rhetorical principles and rules. No. We would proceed with Rhetoric in the High School as we proceeded with Grammar in the Elementary School. We would discover, register, and apply our rules in the process of our practice, proceeding from the art to the science. We begin at once to learn to do by doing, and not by a laborious mastery of tools. We shall get help from models and from judicious criticism, but we shall at once be involved in the elaboration of certain simple principles that are involved in our actual work. We might suggest to our pupils that the simplest thing to be done is to be able to answer their parents' or friends' endlessly repeated questions, "What have you to tell me? What of importance or interest has happened to you to-day or lately? Give an account of yourself. Let's have your story." Here is a real task: why not excel in it? Why not see to it that the story (narration) is clear, has a point (idea, climax), and hangs together (unity); that, if possible, it is interesting and entertaining (style). "See,—this is the sort of thing,—this little sketch from Bunner or Daudet or Stevenson or Hawthorne (a note from one of the 'Note-books,' perhaps). Now recall or hunt up something similar you have heard or read. Try your hand at telling a friend in a letter of something that has happened to you recently. Give an imaginary narrative (oral) to your father in reply to his evening inquiry for the news of the

day.” In some such way we may get started with the real and stimulating business—alas! to some only: to others it is the still boresome business—of writing, instead of with tiresome exercises in how to choose a subject, how to abbreviate, how to arrange a complex sentence, and what not.

We have one more important reason for proceeding in this way; it is the reason that is leading us away—as recent text-books show—from the old synthetic method of proceeding, from the parts to the whole, from a study of bricks and mortar, rooms and floors, instead of from a plan of the whole edifice, and working down to the constituent parts and the required materials. The old method, beginning with words, proceeded to sentences; advanced then to paragraphs, and finally to the whole composition. The new method begins with the large, if inchoate thought that is to articulate itself in a paragraph or a group of paragraphs, and works down into the parts as they are conditioned by the purpose and spirit of the whole. It is an illustration once more of the counsel of the artist,—“Get in your masses first; settle your details afterward, and let them determine themselves through the attempt to create a whole, and to convey a total meaning and impression.”

Let it be admitted that there is difficulty in working out this method consistently. The advocate of the

old method may well urge that in paying so much attention to the larger features of composition work, there is danger of loose dealing with those faults in the use of words, spelling, sentences, construction, and so on, which the student will commit. We cannot, as a matter of practice, ignore those mistakes, or postpone the treatment of them in detail, until we have mastered the art of planning and executing the larger elements of composition. Very true, we answer; there must, after all, be something of a combination of the two methods. But we should insist upon starting at the big end of the plank. We should start by getting our students to envisage in a large way the subject upon which they intend to write, and to articulate its parts gradually, down to the smaller divisions. If it is urged, in rejoinder, that there ought at least to be preliminary work on the sentence, seeing that "sentence-sense" is so fundamental in composition,—we would reply that the sentence as an isolated unit is unknown in composition, save in the form of the proverb. The sentence is always the servant—ay, the child—of the paragraph; and the education of the feeling for the sentence necessarily involves its being studied as a part of the larger whole in which it has its strictly determined function. By and by there may be a review of the whole subject from the synthetic point of view in a brief course in formal Rhetoric, just as there was a

review of Grammar at the conclusion of the Elementary School course.

The parallelism between the courses in Grammar and Rhetoric will hold in still another particular—the use of a text-book. A good text-book in *Composition and Rhetoric* may be used for reference and for occasional exercises, but for little else. The chief desiderata in such a book are a simple summarizing of the leading principles, copious illustrations, and judicious exercises. Let there be a good working class-room collection of the standard books, to which the students may be referred for guidance on particular points. But we have come to believe that our prime task as teachers of Composition and Rhetoric is to bring home to our students how inevitably the art of writing and the science underlying it develop of themselves in and through the orderly, progressive practice of writing. It is upon this practice, and not upon a text-book, that we must rely to develop needs: the text-book may be used to meet these needs; not to forestall or create them.

A text-book may also perform the valuable service of rough-charting a course along which the teacher may guide his pupils; and we are assuming that the teacher will so steady himself by the best text-books, and get from them all the help he can in his voyaging. The pupil must not be allowed to feel that he is merely drifting. He must perceive a

continuity in the stages of his progress; and the teacher must provide for this. And yet his students will learn to write much as an art student learns to paint; by getting to work in the master's studio and taking the master's cues. He will "catch on," will do largely by instinct what the master will know how to justify by theory, until, by and by, an implicit theory emerges out of and steadies the practice. He will accept the master's aid in determining what to do first, on what to concentrate for the time being and what for the nonce to slight or postpone—be it special problems of form, composition, color, values, atmosphere. The master decides that, for the time being, *this* special difficulty must be mastered, as a condition of the next step forward; *that* one left until this is conquered. Without pressing the analogy between two arts, which, while having broad principles in common, differ much in details of method, we may state how, as it seems to us, the four years' work in Composition should be charted.

Our plan is to distribute the technical difficulties of writing as far as possible according to the sharpness and urgency with which they emerge in dealing successively with the four species of Composition. It is clear, for example, that narration involves preëminently the problems of structure in their simplest form; that description brings into more striking clearness problems of diction; exposition, problems

of definition and clearness; while argument involves the consideration of force and tact. Argument indeed conducts us from the domain of Rhetoric to that of Logic, and involves such severities of thought and of skill in construction, that we cannot proceed far with it in the High School.

Narration is so much easier to manage than any other form of composition, that it gives us the best chance to deal with certain elementary and general problems of form and technique. It is the most objective species of literary composition; the writer feels the firm hold of fact and of the simple logic of sequence upon him. Required to move from a definite starting-point to an unmistakable goal,—a simple conclusion in the case of the plotless narrative; a climax, where there is plot,—his task is to mark the larger stages of progression; to paragraph these; to attend to his paragraph echoes and links; to knit well together his component sentences, on the same principle of carrying forward the action step by step, steadily and surely, sentence by sentence, without the endless, dragging chain of the “and” and the “but” formation. The student’s mind is to be kept to the story, his sentence formations—long and short, loose or periodic—corresponding with the nature of the incident, its length or brevity, slowness or swiftness. It is the simplest type of sentence and paragraph—the loose—that is called for; and the

punctuation is correspondingly simple. Simplicity, in fact, a sound straightforwardness, is what is primarily demanded. Wordiness and irrelevancy can be easily detected and demonstrated. The fundamental principles of Unity, Mass, Coherence, Sequence, are seen on a large and convincing scale, and appreciated as they cannot be on a small scale in the sentence,—to which they may now be the more easily applied. As the weight of attention will fall on the logic of incident, the scenic interest and character interest, which involve descriptive work, will be permitted only when such descriptive enlargements are necessary to develop the action. The most conspicuous result of this first stage of our work should be a gain in vigor and precision.

We have already suggested the various forms which Narration may take—personal experience and anecdote in letter and diary; invention in supplying the conclusion of an unfinished tale, or in making variants upon a given story, or in the complete weaving of one. We have also insisted that the work should go hand in hand with the study of models in the literature class, supplemented by special studies in the composition class. We will add here only a recommendation of plenty of work in reduction and expansion. Let the student reduce to the lowest terms the plots of some of Hawthorne's tales; and let the teacher call for the expansion of

a reduction made by himself from some short story unknown to his class. Well-chosen newspaper reports may be treated in the same way. Biography also lends itself to these exercises in economy and condensation.

The work in Description, at the outset of the second year, brings us face to face with a new set of problems. We believe in raising these problems in the sharpest way by considering at the outset the two types of description, — scientific and literary; description for information and explanation, and description for impression and enjoyment. This may be done by comparing examples such, let us say, as those brought into happy juxtaposition by Professor Genung; a guide-book description of Avignon from the *Cyclopædia*, and an impressionistic description from Felix Gras' "The Reds of the Midi." ("The Working Principles of Rhetoric," pp. 16-17.) Following this line of treatment, it may be brought home to the student that in writing a letter of direction to a friend, a diagram of streets and roads will be much more effective in enabling his friend to find his way than a verbal explanation will be. Similarly, the verbal description of an object for identification (a police specification, *e.g.*) will differ from one for appreciation. We shall work out this difference in concrete instances; and in doing so, we shall have to take into account all the vital considerations concerning descriptive writing;

the point of view, the selection of the salient and focal features, the order and grouping of them to the end of economizing the reader's attention, and so on. We shall be led to discriminate between the objective character of the scientific or explanatory description (the truth of external fact) and the subjective character of the impressionistic and appreciative description (seeking truth of subjective impression); between the denotative diction demanded by the one and the connotative, suggestive diction required by the other.

Let there be plenty of this comparative work. Let the student attempt both modes. Let him transform a scientific enumeration or analysis made in the laboratory into a literary description. Read to him or dictate the passage wherein Mr. Stedman contrasts the weather bureau report of an approaching storm with two stanzas of verse reflecting the storm as it sweeps down upon the northern ports, lashes the headlands, and pours its furious armies into the bays. Discuss examples from Darwin and Huxley, Burroughs and Jefferies, books of travel and exploration, books of verse, especially Tennyson's descriptive poems. That is the way to give meaning and interest to the work. A treatment of the Synonym, Simile, Metaphor, will be involved in this. We shall find, as we go, the need of greater skill and variety in sentence-formation, and of more varied punctuation. The significance of rhythm and onomatopoeic effect in literary descrip-

tion will become plain. Finally, descriptive work in versification will be asked for.

We have always found great value in the attempt to lead our students to see wherein description in words differs from the artist's description in color and form. What is it that words cannot give at all, or give but weakly? Shape, color, sound. What can they do that no other vehicle can compass so well? Change, movement, succession — the suggestion, intimation, comparison. Examine with the pupils some of the prolix descriptions attempted occasionally by writers — even Scott. Note how much better the end might have been gained by a sketch or picture. A flood of light may be let in by this method. Students may be brought to a most helpful sense of what they may legitimately attempt by the verbal method of description. This is not advanced work: it comprises the very elements of the subject. The teacher must, of course, be familiar with the distinctions drawn in *Æsthetics* between the time arts and the space arts, and with the gist of Lessing's famous discussion of the subject in the "Laocoön."

When some skill has been acquired, there may be a return to the narrative, with a view to an amalgamation of the two kinds, and an expansion — in cases where it is absolutely required — of the narrative by descriptive adjuncts of character, scenery, and circumstance.

How shall we most effectively begin our intensive

labors in Exposition? By reverting to its kinship with Description; by showing that it is merely a development of Description of the explanatory, enumerative species. We may compare Ruskin's celebrated description of the locomotive, or Thoreau's brief, impressionistic picture of it, with such an expository description as that by Holmes in Lamont's "Specimens of Exposition" (Holt). To avoid confusion, it will be well to bring out strongly the differences rather than the affinities between the two types. Our models will be as distinctive as possible, emphasizing especially the fact that, whereas Description gives us things as they appear to be, as they affect the senses and the mind through the senses, Exposition deals with them as they *are* for thought, "as conceived and organized in thought," to use Professor Genung's phrase; exhibiting their anatomy and their functioning, and rationalizing these so that they may be—must be—understood by any reasonable person. We are to try to get beyond what is particular, individual, and unique in the object and the impression produced by it, to what is general and common. We must get ourselves out of the way first of all,—our idiosyncracies of feeling and expression must be banished; and then we must not allow our interest to be centred on what is peculiar or strange, unusual or abnormal in the thing we are dealing with. Splendid discipline this, both of mind and character!

We shall therefore press on to the means by which we reach this result: definition; analysis, with an understanding of genus, species, and differentia; simplification and explication by repetition, description, or illustration; distinction by antithesis or contrast, obversion, analogy, and comparison. We shall then deal in a new and closer way with terms, and handle words with severer scrutiny; weigh synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, ambiguities, equivocations, etc.; the denotation and connotation of words; the literary and scientific modes of employment.

Following our usual method, these different matters will be dealt with as we go, and not developed at any length rhetorically before we get down to work. It is a good plan to begin with models, and to reduce them to outline form; to summarize, epitomize, and at times paraphrase or metaphrase them. In original work we may begin simply, with subjects carefully delimited; and it is here, where it becomes fully significant, that this problem of the delimitation of the topic should be studied, and not before. General propositions involving no great complexity of treatment, and no extended research, will serve best,—topics involving definition and discussion rather than propositions involving the forestalling of objections. Then we shall go into methods of treatment. The processes to be gone through will be something like this:—

1. Taking stock of one's own ideas and knowledge ; overhauling it, and so realizing the gaps in one's knowledge and the cloudiness in one's thoughts, etc.
2. Rough sketch of a plan of treatment on the basis of one's present knowledge ; making the best of this, and getting it provisionally organized.
3. Getting new thought and knowledge, and verifying old ; consulting dictionary, encyclopædia, and standard authorities. Taking notes on our reading.
4. Revision and expansion of the first sketch in the light of the new facts and ideas ; involving us in the selection and rejection of material available. Decision as to scale of treatment ; proportion.
5. Final arrangement and development : —
 - (1) The larger masses. (2) Detailed outline, providing for subordinate elements. Special attention to beginning (announcement of theme) and conclusion, with its summary, if one is desirable.

There will be class exercises in several of these processes : delimitations of general topics ; provisional outlines made on the basis of present information and ideas ; discussion and elaboration by the class ; revised outlines on the basis of the new information and suggestions contributed by the class. Then, after concluding criticisms and suggestions by the teacher, the same

topics or others may be assigned for home treatment after further research and more careful consideration.

The transition from Exposition to Argument is natural, inevitable. It means a change from explanation to advocacy; from non-commitment to partisanship; from the setting forth in an orderly manner of something that is so, to the establishing of something that is not conceded, but must be proved and carried. Here there is a right and a wrong, or at least a better and a worse; and we are the challenging or challenged champions of what we believe to be the right, the better. Our forces must be ranged in battle array; properly placed and supported with a view to the nature and resources and probable tactics of the other side. We may trace a certain analogy between Narration and Description, and Exposition and Argument, respectively, in this wise: Exposition, like Narration, presents a series of stages along a prescribed route with a goal at the end, each stage being naturally sequent upon the preceding one; whereas in Argument, as in Description, we have not a straight, sectioned road to traverse; but rather a labyrinth to thread, a pattern to weave, a settled point of view to keep;—in fine, there must be a scheme of reasoning upon which the ordering and presentation of our facts depend. Each step forward has to be taken cautiously and circumspectly, with an eye to the total effect; and must be safeguarded from surprise and attack. Then there must be advance into the oppo-

nents' territory ; and plans to surprise and disarm or to discomfort and rout, must be carefully laid.

The way must be opened by a little systematic work, with models before us, on the nature and processes of argument ; the syllogism and enthymeme ; induction and deduction ; hypothesis, inference, and proof ; attack and refutation by *reductio ad absurdum* and otherwise. Then we shall enter on debate, on the basis of the carefully prepared brief, holding our debaters strictly to account in following it ; in the course of which our first modicum of theory will be developed. We shall call periodically for briefs and for the whole or parts of a speech, — sometimes before and sometimes after delivery. We shall require the whole class occasionally to write certain parts of a speech on a given theme, — either openings, refutations, conclusions, or perorations ; these being general exercises for the development of readiness and effectiveness. The work may be lightened occasionally by exercises in the humorous, ironic, or epigrammatic manners, — if the teacher can trust himself to keep such work within proper bounds.

These things become possible only if we keep the work simple and vital. It is a great mistake to go far afield in either Exposition or Argumentation and Debate (especially in the latter) into large and, to the students, remote questions of public and political controversy. That will be the tendency ; boys and girls would be men and women before their time. But the

chief reason why we should rein the Pegasus of youth in this matter is that we shall be missing a great opportunity to bring our students to close quarters with the problems of personal and educational life which they ought to be revolving, and do fitfully revolve at this time. We can teach them to grapple with these pertinent problems in a thorough and systematic, instead of a slipshod, haphazard way. We can induce a habit of reflection and sober second-thinking, a desire to interrogate ready-made opinion and unexamined prejudice ; we can help to check hasty generalizations, and demonstrate the necessity of consulting precedent and adducing proof and illustration ; we can correct the callow egotism of the intellectual fledgling ; and above all, we can give dignity and meaning to the interests and everyday affairs of youth. Our work will be, not for display, but usefulness. We shall have on our hands the important business of helping to form and clarify the public opinion of the school.

In the course of the work on Argumentation and Debate, there will be opportunity for using and reviewing all the other kinds of Composition. Exposition is, of course, involved first of all ; and the method of the analytical outline will be that followed in the preparation of the brief, although the brief will permit of parenthetical annotations, for help in speaking, which the expository outline will not include. The appeal to the feelings involved in the attempt to persuade will,

it will early be discovered, require skill in illustration, description, and narration. And, as distinctive features, considerations of rhythm and verbal effectiveness, of dignity and impressiveness, of elevation yet variety of tone (where, by the way, we shall have to deal in particular with the balanced construction), will occupy us on the side of formal Rhetoric.

And now, in bringing our treatment to a close, we must—omitting many matters of not unimportant detail—mention some general points.

First, as to class methods. The skilful management of class discussion by the teacher is the most vital factor in the situation. We have urged that there should be plenty of reading of the students' productions. Each should feel that he may be called on at any recitation to read what he has written, for the judgment of his classmates. It is they, his peers, rather than his teacher, who are to be for him as he writes his audience and critics. Behind them will stand for his imagination, as final appraiser, judge, and court of appeal, the figure of his teacher, of whom he should think as holding him to his very best, as following his every step in progress, as demanding evidence of his having profited by all the help received. The class discussion ought to be the most valuable of aids. Next in importance (though prior in time) is the preliminary discussion in the class of the topics assigned for home work. The teacher's directions as to the kind of com-

position desired ought to be adequate; and often it may be desirable to probe the topic in a broad, suggestive way so as to stimulate thought and open up possible methods of treatment, available models, and sources of information.

As to the teacher's correction of work handed in to him, he must be careful not to overdo correction: that discourages; and so does much rewriting. Some of the more serious and significant blunders and shortcomings may be written on the board to be corrected on the spot, or otherwise. Errors in spelling and punctuation may be similarly treated; and — let it on no account be forgotten — special excellences brought to the notice of the class. Of course, these aids must not be lavish and constant, and must not weaken the students' power to walk alone. Errors below a certain percentage may be corrected on the paper or on a separate sheet. The student or the teacher should keep all compositions for the sake of reference. When a student is doing unusually poor work, the teacher should seek for the deeper, hidden causes, psychological or physical; and aid in remedying them rather than their innumerable results in the defective compositions.

As to the form of the work, and the cultivation of the sense of form, we have already declared our opinions on the point (see pp. 192-193). Rules will help but little; we must work in a larger way for an organic appreciation of comeliness, order, and expressiveness

by spacing and arrangement, pagination, margination, indention, paragraphing, titling. We may try to arouse a sense for clear, formal handwriting as we should for artistic printing. A few specimens of old manuscripts may help. Perhaps an old leisurely dignity may not be beyond recall. We may war against modern rush and flurry.

Finally, we would emphasize the importance of working for sincerity, of escaping, that is, from conventional, ready-made ways of speaking and writing; of commending individuality in seeing and reporting, or, in the case of natures of an imitative cast, individual admirations, — a boy's loving pupilage to a favorite author, — so only they be genuine and heartfelt. Let us hail differences gladly, keeping our own preferences out of the way, and emphasizing them only when there is a call for the championship of the noble against the petty, the real against the sham. The most fatal of results — and a not infrequent one — is when boys write what they think will please the teacher and will jog with his views and whims. The best of results is where, along with an initial humility in the presence of greatness, we can secure a bold reliance upon the truth as our young scholars see it, and that independence of spirit which scorns prevarication and make-believe, the cheap pose and flippant jest

CHAPTER XVIII

VERSIFICATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

THE course in versification is, as we have already intimated, an integral and vital part of the English work, and not a mere fringe upon it. The ends which are to be gained by it are, (1) a deepened appreciation of poetry in and through the attempt to fashion quasi-poetic products,—again an attempt to teach through self-activity; (2) a development of the power to distinguish between the peculiar “notes” of poetry and of prose,—that is, between discourse suffused and heightened with emotion, and discourse pitched in the lower key of prose writing; and (3), with this, a craftsman-like way of handling words ingeniously,—to manipulate inversions, to scrutinize vocabulary closely, and to command synonyms and rhyme words; and (4) developing this literary tactfulness, by learning to employ simile, metaphor and other figures, alliteration and onomatopœia, where they may be legitimately employed to gain certain common literary effects—light or stately, tripping or slow-footed, humorous or grave.

It is necessary, of course, at the very outset to put the students at a right point of view by explaining to them these purposes. There is to be no attempt to make poets, any more than there is to make great painters by the work in drawing, painting, and modeling.

The class is to understand that, much as the boys in the old English Grammar Schools wrote (and still write) Latin verse to show their mastery of Latin quantity and the elementary rules of Latin composition and versification; so they, too, are to give evidence of a certain accuracy and facility in the handling of their mother-tongue, of an ear for word-music, and of a reminiscent appreciation of the work of the poets studied. Experience has shown us that there need be little or no fear of any injurious effects: but that, on the contrary, very excellent results may be obtained, — chief among them, a new zest in the English work, and a great deal of innocent and refined pleasure through the invigorating effort to scale the low foot-hills of Parnassus.

An essential condition of success is system in the work. There must be a basis of systematic work in scansion; and then the progressive study and production of verse forms in their increasing complexity. We will deal first of all with the work in scansion.

Scansion is to be regarded as a method of indicating by a system of signs, how verse is to be read aloud

It is a means of training the ear. The pupils are to show by the use of this notation the accent or rhythm, the quantity and the tempo, of the lines. In order that this may be done, however, there must be certain changes in the methods ordinarily employed, and, indeed, a better technical understanding of English versification than is usually shown in our text-books. For example, it will not do to start from the principle that the basis of English versification is accent merely. Quantity or duration is an important element, and must also be taken into account. Our system will accordingly make allowance for the spondee and pyrrhic as well as the iambus, the trochee, and other kinds of feet mentioned in text-books and treatises; for the reason that a foot is frequently made up of two equally accented syllables, — sometimes heavy (spondee) and sometimes light (pyrrhic). Moreover, due allowance must be made for the irregularities of English verse, the impossibility, that is, of scanning the higher products of English poetry by any uniform sing-song method. The student must be made to feel at the very outset that verse when it is passionate is, as Ruskin says, "made more beautiful by certain modes of transgression of the constant law" exemplified in the normal lines. Unless the pupils feel the changing pulsation of the verse, realizing that the music varies with the rise and fall of the passion, then we shall have that wooden and valueless scansion that actually damages the ear

and beclouds the poetic perception. A very good text to follow is this paragraph from Ruskin's "Elements of English Prosody": —

"The measures of verse, while their first simple function is to please by the sense of rhythm, order, and art, have for second and more important function that of assisting, and in part compelling, clearness of utterance; thus enforcing with noble emphasis, noble words; and making them, by their audible symmetry, not only emphatic, but memorable."

If we follow this clew, and adopt a suitable method, we shall find that our students are undergoing an education not only of their musical sense, but of their poetic nature, their power of feeling, their capacity for passion, — which is of far greater importance.

Let us at once illustrate what we mean by our contention that a regard must be had for quantity as well as for accent in English verse. Suppose that our students are in their first year reading Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar." It is the passage in which Cassius is attempting to rouse Brutus's feelings against Cæsar: —

"Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about. . . ."

How impossible to scan these lines according to any regular iambic plan. The student, in order to indicate by his notation how the passage should be read, will

have to employ other signs.¹ He will mark his lines like this :—

Why man || he doth | bestride | the nar|row world
 Like a | Colos | sus || and | we pet|ty men
 Walk un|der his | huge legs | and peep | about

So, too, if we are reading, let us say, Milton's "L'Allegro," a similar effort must be made to indicate the variations upon the normal iambic tetrameter line, and—a more difficult matter—the irregularities of the ten introductory lines which are so full of musical expressiveness. We shall want the pupil to feel (and to show in his scansion) the forceful staccato effect in that opening energetic dismissal of loathed melancholy, with the emphatic force of the word "loathed" :—

Hence, loath|ed mel|ancholy.

What a metrical absurdity the line becomes when read as regular iambic trimeter. It is difficult to indicate the light stress on "mel." And so with the fifth line that gives us more of the same sense of emphatic and energetic power :—

Find out | some un|couth cell.

Not only effects of this kind with their heavy trailing emphasis, but the very opposite light effects of the tripping lines,—

¹ We have tried, for simplicity, to make the one set ordinarily used serve. We need two : one for accent and one for quantity. Note difficulty in case of "mel'-ancholy" (below), and "Liberty" (next p.).

$\underline{\text{Come}}, | \text{and } \underline{\text{trip}} | \text{it } \underline{\text{as}} | \text{you } \underline{\text{go}}, |$
 $\underline{\text{On}} | \text{the } \underline{\text{light}} | \underline{\text{fantas}} | \underline{\text{tic}} \underline{\text{toe}} |$

must be appreciated, and it may be desirable to indicate, in words, the changes from "slow" to "quick," "stately" to "tripping," and so on. Thus, in the lines that follow, we must be sensitive to the change in word values which betokens the touch of seriousness in the thought:—

$\underline{\text{And}} \underline{\text{in}} | \text{thy } \underline{\text{right}} | \underline{\text{hand}} \underline{\text{lead}} | \underline{\text{with}} \underline{\text{thee}}$
 $\underline{\text{The}} \underline{\text{moun}} | \underline{\text{tain}} \underline{\text{nymph}}, | \underline{\text{sweet}} \underline{\text{Lib}} | \underline{\text{erty}};$

noting the beautiful emphasis secured by the strong "right hand," followed by the rich vowel effects of "lead" and "thee"; and again in the next line, the full values of "mountain nymph" and "sweet." To miss these things is to miss what alone gives value to the exercises in scansion.

This is no place to attempt to set forth at length the views on English versification implied in the position taken above; and what we have said must suffice. On any other basis, the writer would not regard it as worth while to bother his students with scansion. It is, for him, a means of cultivating an appreciation of the musical and passionate expressiveness of great poetry.

And now we may indicate the lines upon which our progressive studies of verse forms should proceed. In

order that the student may not be hampered by the difficulty of rhyme at the beginning, our first exercise may be in blank verse, taken in connection with some blank-verse poem that we are studying. Let us suppose that it is the selections from Bryant's translation of the "Odyssey," the "Ulysses among the Phæacians" before mentioned. We may give the class a start by proposing a subject, and providing a first line. The subject is to be "The Sirens"; the moment chosen being when they sang their luring songs to Ulysses as he and his sailors sailed by their dread abode; or, if the students prefer, the sailors may be Jason and his Argonauts (the writer once read to his class William Morris's dialogue between the Sirens and Orpheus). It will not do to pitch the note too high, and so an introductory line like this may be suggested:—

And as they neared the shore they heard the songs
and if a second line is desirable, we may continue:—

Of Sirens sweetly singing from the bay. . . .

The class will be asked to suggest the next line; and by means of suggestion and criticism, we may build up a little stanza of five or six lines that will have served to give courage and stimulus to our young craftsmen. Let them now be asked to take either the same subject or any other and produce a dozen lines or so. Of course, there will be all sorts of ludi-

crous bungling; but it will all be worth while. To many the work will be a first revelation of the charm and significance of verse.

The advance from blank verse to the couplet and the quatrain is a natural step forward. The quatrain we have found it convenient to take in connection with the study of Gray's "Flegy"; the couplet, when Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" is studied. A simple exercise in connection with Gray is to attempt a description of morning twilight hours and sunrise, with the sounds and sights common to country life at dawn. The subject is discussed, and various experiences are contributed, and, almost before it is aware, the class has on hand a stock of material which may be worked up into verse form. Similarly with Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." The exercise may be an attempt to describe some deserted building or spot which the students have known, or some person or place after the manner of the descriptions of the village parson and schoolmaster in Goldsmith's poem.

At this point we may begin the study of the more formal and compact types of poem. We have usually begun with that dainty form of French verse, the triolet,—a copious supply of models for which may be found in the little volume of "Ballades and Rondeaux" in the *Canterbury Poets*, compiled by Mr. Gleason White. In fact, it may be well to take this

form, and to work it before the quatrain and couplet are handled. Here again, of course, the results will be anything but satisfactory; the dainty triolet will be so roughly handled that the teacher's taste and conscience will be sorely tried. It will be well, as a first exercise, to give a motive or subject, and to supply the first two lines; for example, if we should be working at the time on Milton's shorter poems, we may take a cue from "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso"; we have also used the "Merchant of Venice" and secured creditable triolets on Portia, setting as a first line—

Love laughed in her eyes. . . .

The triolet may lead on into the single quatrain embodying an epigram. Models may be drawn from William Watson, Landor, and Emerson. After this the progression may be successively through the sextain, the octette (*ottava rima*), the Spenserian stanza, and, finally, the sonnet. We have managed to secure a passable sonnet from about fifty per cent of our senior class.

If circumstances favor, along with these exercises we may work in a little imitative work, a ballad or narrative poem at times, and a few parodies, using Bayard Taylor, Owen Seaman, and other masters in this line. Now the class will produce its class song, and sometimes verses for special commemorative occasions, — Memorial Day, Christmas, May Day, etc. .

Such in brief is the plan we ourselves have followed. Without some such course in versification, we regard the work in English as lacking one important means of culture, and one efficient aid in securing good results in linguistic expression.

CHAPTER XIX

THE QUESTION OF FORMALISM IN METHOD

WHAT we have to say in these supplementary or summarizing words on method is said as the result of experience, not alone in teaching boys and girls in the Elementary School and the High School, but also in the teaching and training of teachers, including teachers of the higher and lower grades in our public schools.

The chief burden of our counsel,—when we are asked for an opinion on the subject,—is that what we chiefly need for the improvement of our English teaching is a broader, richer, and more thorough literary training and culture for our teachers.¹ It must be

¹ We provide for ourselves a little shelter from any possible downpour of protest against our attitude by quoting these words from a recent address of President Hadley, of Yale: "The chief difficulty is that we have at present so few teachers who are competent to give good instruction in English except through the medium of Latin or Greek. Over and over again have I heard men argue for the extension of English teaching in place of the classics, when the speakers showed by their diction, their grammar, and their rhetoric, that they had not the least conception of what good English expression really was. . . . When we have a body of teachers who are ready to teach English with equal seriousness, and are able to suppress that vastly greater body who handle it mechanically or carelessly, then, and not till then, shall we be able to talk of superseding the classics in our educational system. Under present conditions they-re-

insisted that they shall be exemplary in their habits of speech, capable and interesting readers and writers; well schooled — concretely and practically schooled — in the principles of Rhetoric and Criticism, so that they may know and feel good literature when they see it; generally well read in the great classics (absolutely necessary to the formation of taste and judgment), and in the history of, at least, English Literature. We may take for granted the possession of those general attainments — disciplining power, sympathy, patience, etc. — which are essential in a teacher of anything; there being no need for special emphasis upon any of these qualities in connection with English teaching unless it be the possession of imaginative sympathy with the child, — the power to take the child's point of view in the sphere of imagination, fancy, illusion, make-believe; to be myth-maker, fetich-worshipper, idolater, play-actor, with him. To do this is difficult, we know, and implies that love of children and childhood which is the one infallible mark of the true teacher; but we shall not enlarge upon this familiar idea.

If we do not lay stress upon the need of a new methodology, upon more psychology, child-study, Herbartian lore, and the obstetrics of pedagogy generally, it is not because we are insensible of the value of these things.

main vitally important to the welfare of the country as a means to accurate expression and clear thought in the communications between man and map." — From the "Education of the American Citizen."

We rate them high; but we hold that the clamorous need of the hour, so far as English teaching is concerned, is, above all, a more adequate culture, a sound elementary knowledge and practice of English, the possession of linguistic power, refinement, and liking.

We regret the large proportion of time that is often lavishly spent on the study of *how* to teach, only because there is more pressing need of getting to know *what* to teach. Of what weak avail it is that a teacher should know all the devices to be followed in composition work, if she uses bad English in her presentation, and is a bungler when it comes to doing herself what she asks her pupils to do. The most skilful questions are spoiled if they are put in bad grammar or inexpert language. Linguistic and literary proficiency is as much to be required in a teacher of English as artistic skill and cultivation are required in a teacher of Art. The teacher must be a craftsman.

When it is fully understood and realized, however, that the first essential of good teaching is an adequate knowledge of the subject taught, and (in the case of English) a feeling for it and a power over it, we may safely proceed to consider more curiously questions of method.

We use the word "method" here to imply orderly procedure in one's work, in its largest aspects as in its minute details. We have more than once laid stress upon the initial importance of planning one's work.

Good, clear, large planning is indispensable; and the plans must be the teacher's own, reflecting her own insights, her own hold upon the subject, her personal preferences and outlook. In Literature she is forbidden to teach what she does not like.

Plans are essential even for the most inspired, just because they are inspired. Their inspiration must be under control; and it must be assisted and get its chance by being unhampered by any anxiety as to the purpose it is serving. Inspiration runs to waste if it is not wisely employed. It is a steed that needs hitching to a serviceable wagon. The plan is this wagon. Besides, the teacher who does not plan well ahead, bears a harassing daily burden of anxious, hand-to-mouth contriving. If she has settled well in advance *what* she shall do,—which is not a matter of inspiration, but of careful ingenuity,—she may then devote her attention to the problem of *how* to do it,—of how to utilize the unforeseen circumstances of the hour; how to use those unexpected allies, or thwart those unsuspected difficulties, which are always turning up. Here is the chance for daily inspiration: let the teacher be free to take it.

. In adopting plans she will be unwise to repose upon text-book plans. Slavishly to follow them is better, to be sure, than to have none at all; but is poor policy. In the first place, no teacher will see eye to eye with the writer of the text-book; she must at least edit it

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for her own use, to play into the hands, not only of her own capacities and stock of knowledge, but also of the outfit and needs of her pupils. We recall here an instance which, although it did not occur in connection with elementary school work, is apt. A certain much-used text-book, treating of diction, proceeds in traditional fashion to insist upon the importance of purity, etc., and warns against barbarisms. The student (first year High School) must restrain his weakness for using obsolete words, "ycleped, for called"! he must shun hybrids, *e.g.* "singist"! for singer, and resist the temptation to bandy such technical words as "anneal," "reagent." We heard this gravely recited by a first year High School class. What teacher with sound sense, who plans with an eye for her own real boys and girls, will waste time in this way? Who, in dealing with common errors, localisms, or slang, will not consider the actual barbarisms to which her own pupils are prone, instead of strange text-book importations? Her own plans will provide closely and liberally for her own boys and girls with their actual outfit, their peculiar shortcomings, their actual circumstances, and their probable destiny; and will ignore the irrelevancies of the text-book, which is to be her servant and not her master.

But there are some special difficulties against which we must be on our guard. In teaching English, more especially in the earlier years, perspective and empha-

sis, suggestion and imitation, are so important and yet so elusive and fluid, that planning is as difficult as it is necessary. The chief difficulty may be indicated by the word *thoroughness*; to be thorough enough, and thorough with the kind of thoroughness possible in such a matter as language; to avoid pedantic, literal, murderous thoroughness—how difficult that is!

That would be an absurd thoroughness in drawing which would keep a child drawing circles until it could draw a perfect one. Similarly, it would be a choking pedantry in English work that would confine a child to the practice of certain words or forms of speech until its usage was rigorously perfect. Clearly, thoroughness in an art is a relative thing,—relative to the general powers of the child; it can only be approximative. But to allow so much is to open the door, it might seem, to slovenliness, to touch-and-go methods, to the fine haphazard, spontaneous, unpondered work which is done by some “inspired” teachers,—day-by-day, hand-to-mouth work. This is to run with blind scare from Scylla straight into the clutches of Charybdis. There must be a plan that, while recognizing the indeterminateness of the child’s growth in the grasp and use of language, in appreciative and creative power, nevertheless aims at certain definite, restricted results, so far as these can be proximately secured from the child. The teacher must by experience form her expectations as to the degree of thoroughness that may be expected, and then work

systematically and clearly for it step by step. In some few things absolute accuracy may be worked for,—as in memorizing work, in the pronunciation or enunciation of certain words, in the general form of the written work; but in most things (such as the meanings of words, spelling, handwriting, story-telling) we must be satisfied with what, by dint of good example, patient practice, wise correction, and frequent but changeful (and disguised) repetition, the child can on an average attain to.

As to method generally, it is nothing more than developed common sense, as Huxley insists somewhere.¹ One may be well versed in the theory of method and yet be a very poor teacher: for no method can be successful without the tact that comes of careful, cautious practice. However, one teacher's experience may assist others in developing a method of their own; and the writer therefore puts on record what he regards as the more important counsels of perfection which have formed themselves in his own mind, with the possibility of their being of use to some fellow workers:—

1. To teach one thing at a time, but always in relation to one's plan as a whole; as an outgrowth of what has gone before, and as pointing forward to what is to

¹ Huxley's essay on Descartes' famous "Essay on Method" is worth many of the more technical treatments of this topic, and has the recommendation of being well and attractively written. De Garmo's "Essentials of Method" (Heath) will be found helpful.

succeed. Figuratively, provide every fact with proper couplings, so that it may take its place in a series. Beware of discursiveness and miscellaneousness.

2. To let everything attempted either by oneself or one's pupils be done as well as it can the first time, and not indifferently well because there will be a chance to improve upon it later, for

(a) As to the teacher's part, the first impression or impact upon the child is incalculably important, coloring all subsequent dealings with the matter: hence, it should be as clean and strong, as telling and unforgettable, as stimulating and suggestive, as it can be made; and

(b) As to the child, any initial slackness discounts subsequent effort. The child ceases to be "all there." We have in mind, as an evil in English work, the practice so often permitted of making first the "rough" copy of the composition, and then the "fair," improved copy. Sometimes this is unavoidable or desirable; but there ought to be as little of it as possible, as it begets children who can do nothing "out of hand," with promptness and certainty of attack. It fosters slovenliness and half-heartedness. In reading, similarly, the beginner must do his best at the first attempt.

3. While, however, the deep first impression is very important, it is not by any means sufficient in order to secure lasting interest in the deeper sense of that

term, — the sort of interest that will brace the energies for any drudgery that it may be necessary to undertake; the sort of interest that is a motive toward the discipline of the will. And to fail to secure this sturdier kind of interest, is a very serious defeat in attempting to teach a subject like Literature, in which interest is the very breath of life. That the indispensable initial wave of interest may not spend itself to little and partial purpose, it must be backed by another which shall catch this, and sweep the new thing into vital relations with the existing interests of the child. In technical terms, it is not enough that the new thing should be perceived; it must be apperceived; must receive a warm welcome into the child's mental habitation, and open up communications and sympathetic alliances with the old dwellers in that habitation.

4. To insure this result it is desirable to prepare the way, or, to keep to our trope, to herald the approach of the newcomer; so that the child may sympathetically go out to meet it in a mood, and with knowledge enough, to stimulate appreciation. This means (1) creating a favorable attitude of mind and a right emotional atmosphere, (2) removing obvious stumbling-blocks in the way of the child's approach to the subject, — any strange, puzzling facts that are prominent in the poem or story, unfamiliar names, allusions, a knowledge of which is vital.

5. To get in one's masses first is the phrase, borrowed from the studio, that best expresses our next counsel. Begin always with the large, salient aspects of things: ignore all detail that may be ignored, in order to get a powerful seizure of a thing as a whole. Fill in details later — and for the very young child, the fewer the better. How far to elaborate detail the teacher's tact must decide. Exhaustive treatment is always a mistake; the plant must be left growing in the mind.

6. *Repetitio mater studiorum*: this maxim of the Jesuit educators is peculiarly true of literary studies. One must be always deepening one's hold on the old and great things, lovingly recalling them and conning them, as we do with the great tunes and pictures. Repeat, review, *revive* continually; but in new and unexpected ways, in new lights, in altered perspective, in fresh connections. Some new effect is usually to be gained by comparison or contrast. Encourage delighted brooding, especially upon the big things that will stay with one; let the affections gather more and more massively about them.

7. To develop in the child a sense of responsibility toward his knowledge and powers. Make him a reverent curator of his treasures: call him continually to account. Above all, let him "do something about it"; *i.e.* turn his possessions to use. Hold him, however, to strict account only on work actually done

with him, and on things he is expected to know — not on outside or supplementary matters.

8. Be as independent of your text-book as possible. Know well the literature you use. Have a full memory. Work out of your appreciation: *le cœur au métier*.

CHAPTER XX

SUMMARY — IDEALS AND AIMS IN THE TEACHING AND STUDY OF ENGLISH, WITH SOME CRITICISMS OF PREVAILING PRACTICES.

IN conclusion we may attempt to summarize some of our leading points and to supplement these with a few after-thoughts.

I. Literature and Language must be taught from their own distinctive point of view, — the point of view of Art. They are not information studies; they are not sciences; they aim to develop, not knowledge, but power, — imaginative sympathy, sensibility, admiration. This means that when a teacher passes from a lesson in Geography, let us say, to one in Reading, her point of view must undergo a complete change. Now she has quite other aims than those pursued in her geography work; now the whole atmosphere of the class room has altered. She has been dealing in her geography work with facts and their logical connection; now she is dealing with the emotional interpretation of facts, with experience in its relation to human hopes and fears, fancies and imaginings, desires and duties, ideals and aspirations. The fact is now of less importance

than the spiritual rendering or interpretation of it, the emotional response to it. Has she been telling the little people about the winds—breeze, gale, hurricane—and the points of the compass—polar North and tropic South? Now she turns to poetry, and lo! the wind has become a human presence for the child:—

“O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field or tree,
Or just a big, strong child like me?”

and by and by the naïve imagination of the child, which conceives of the weird horseman riding by in the moaning darkness, will become the adult imagination which, with Shelley, feels the “wild west wind” as the very “breath of Autumn’s being.”¹

What we too often find is that the teacher has not **this** fundamental perception of the meaning and function of Literature. Literary products are handled grossly, for their fact values; or, in the higher grades, as products the merely intellectual comprehension of which calls for certain explanations, grammatical or allusional. But what has to be worked for is spiritual discernment and emotional apprehension. This defect is not to be wondered at. To handle Literature as such requires not a little culture; and culture, in the form of æsthetic

¹ The difference between the scientific and the poetic statement of a fact is concretely and happily illustrated by Edmund Clarence Stedman in his “Elements of Poetry.”

insight, is the last requirement we have made of our teachers. We speak out of experience as a teacher of teachers; and we assert that the teacher who knows what the specific and proper office of Literature is, as distinguished from that of Science, is a rare and precious exception; and rarer still is one who can distinguish a first class poem or short story from a second or third rate one, or can apply the fundamental canons of literary criticism.

Let us hasten to say that the teachers are not wholly, nor indeed principally, to blame in this matter. They are not always taught, nor are they always in their teaching expected, to deal with Literature as such. We have already cited an illustration of this from the Language Number of *New York Teachers' Monographs*. We pointed out that the examination questions on the "Lady of the Lake," which were put to the graduating classes in public schools to secure admission to the High Schools, included not a single literary question among the ten of them, but that the paper was a grammar paper almost entirely. What teacher can do good literary work with such a paralyzing test to prepare for? How can she prevent her term's work from being other than stupid drudgery and rude butchery, which must disgust her pupils with Literature altogether?

II. Passing from appreciation to usage, the fundamental principle to be followed is that the mastery of

language is a matter of practice, — practice animated by interest and enthusiasm, guided by good models and by wise counsel and criticism. Children learn their native tongue by imitation; and imitation continues to be, throughout the school course, the chief factor in language work. The rules of Grammar and rhetorical precept are later and comparatively unimportant means to the end sought. Of models, the most influential is the teacher herself; the influence of book models is heavily discounted if the teacher's own practice is not exemplary and winning. And by example we mean, first and foremost, oral example. Here again we have been very slack in our requirements, very low in our standards. The shortcomings of the average teacher as a writer are serious enough (we speak after much reading of teachers' compositions, note-books, etc.). Their unguarded spoken language, however, is worse than their written productions. The standard to-day (thanks to the energetic efforts of such men as Superintendent William H. Maxwell) is rather higher, doubtless, than it was a few years ago when Dr. Rice reported the results of his observations; but it is still ridiculously low. One still hears at times bad grammar and idiom; while as for any stylistic quality, revealing literary or artistic feeling, how rare it is! We also look in vain in the average school for good, cultivated pronunciation, clear enunciation, pleasant tones, a proper use of the vocal organs. Again we say, small blame as a rule to the teachers,

who neither by training nor examination are impressed with the importance of these things. And this brings us to our next point.

III. The basis of all literary training is oral. The ear is the arbiter of speech; the mouth, not the pen, its greatest instrument. Not "Does it look right?" but "Does it sound right?" is the first and fundamental test of language; it is the ready test of everyday life, and the final test of the great poets and masters of Literature. We are more and more a reading and writing people, to be sure; and yet we must not undervalue the practical importance of oral proficiency as an element of success in life. To be "well spoken" is still a strong point in a man's favor in many walks of life. The pleasant voice and delivery, the breeding implied in correct speech, the evidence of character and culture in the touch of distinction in the vocabulary, the power of graphic description and narration,—these things have sometimes even a commercial value; while ability to read and recite agreeably, to debate and argue effectively, is almost everywhere a valuable asset, and in certain callings — political, ministerial, legal — an indispensable condition of success.

We must gain the ear of the child; that is at first our only resource as teachers; and our chief resource it ought to be at all times. We must cultivate the child's auditory taste as, in our art work, we must cultivate his visual taste. It is well known that many of our errors

in spelling are the outcome of faulty oral impressions. But we do not act upon this theory. We address our language work in the main to the eye, and slight the art of the tongue. We do not examine orally either our pupils or our teachers. A teacher's habits of speech may be abominable, but we do not find it out; and we shall not, until we make much of oral examinations. Worse still, when we do discover it, we are not troubled by it. We have been inclined to greet as a fantastical heresy Professor Corson's proposal that our literary examinations shall be tests in reading; and that literary culture shall mean, first of all, vocal culture. But his arguments in his admirable little book, "The Aims of Literary Study" (to which we have already drawn the attention of teachers), are in the main irrefutable.¹ We must follow Dr. Corson's line of argument, too, in maintaining that the greatest influences in the literary education of the child are those which flow from the impressive vocal rendering of great poems by the teacher. (A great poem ill presented is like a great picture seen in a poor light.) These may be made great character-forming experiences in the life of the child; great spiritual experiences. And the psychologists are with us in attaching importance to this neglected side of literary training. Mr. Tracy, in his "Psychology

¹ We refer to this and to Dr. Corson's companion volume, "The Voice and Spiritual Education" (both published by the Macmillan Co.), as containing the best supports of this position.

of Childhood" (Heath), quotes the French dictum, "*L'oreille est le chemin du cœur*" — "The ear is the pathway to the heart" — and adds, "There is no sense, in the education of which greater care should be taken than the sense of hearing."¹

We have been led almost insensibly from one aspect of vocal and auditory training (considered, *i.e.*, as a means to correct, skilful, refined discourse) to the other (considered as the chief means of spiritual interpretation) as the pathway to the heart, as the means therefore of moral and spiritual education. This is a principal point, which takes us from the more technical to the largest cultural view of our subject. Hence the great importance we ought to attach to vocal accomplishment in the teacher — good reading and reciting and story-telling. A special plea should be made for good story-telling. The story, we think, ought to play a much more prominent part than it has played in the class room. Story-telling, with all the magic of personal coloring and mimicry in oral delivery, should be one of the teacher's best accomplishments. Story-telling — anecdote, the gleanings from experience and reading to entertain company, as the peasant balladist in the hut, the Arab in his tent, the gypsy by the wayside

¹ He also cites these words from Perez' "Education Morale dès le Berceau": "*Envelopper l'enfant d'une atmosphère de sons doux, tendres, et réjouissants, c'est travailler à son bonheur actuel, c'est faire beaucoup pour son humeur et sa moralité future.*"

or around the camp-fire, makes use of it—may be a much more powerful agency in our education than we have made of it hitherto.

Nothing but good would come of the attempt to be less print-ridden, to forsake and forget, more than is our wont, the cold printed page, and to catch warmth and glamour from the voice. We shall stand no chance of getting this, however, until we demand from our teachers pleasant, pure, and flexible utterance; a feeling for rhythm and rhyme; a power of evoking the onomatopoeic, alliterative, and musical effects of language.

IV. The supreme aim of literary and linguistic training is the formation of character. This includes and transcends all other aims; and it is because it is an aim which can be more effectually realized by Literature and Language than by any other study, that Literature, by almost common consent, must hold the central and dominating place in our school curriculum. The springs of a man's character are in his loves and hates, his tastes and desires, his ideals and aspirations; and the life of these depends much upon the light and the perspective with which they have been invested by the imagination. This imaginative exaltation of life, of noble human longings and ideals, it is the province of art, and especially of Literature as the highest art, to achieve, and, in turn, to foster and communicate. Here we have the starting-point and the goal of all

education, and the master-motive of all literary discipline and nurture. We do not educate primarily for knowledge; for the possession of knowledge affords no guarantee that it will be worthily employed. It is a means to an end; and that end is the animating interest, the controlling aim and impulse, of a man's activity. We communicate knowledge in vain if we do not evoke stable and growing interests and enthusiasms. Of what avail all our nature study, if it has not quickened a love of nature, an ennobling curiosity and reverent wonder in the presence of the physical world? Of what avail our history study, if it is not a treasured Ariadne's thread to lead us through the labyrinth of the problems, personal, social, and political, that wall us about on all sides? Of what avail to have read Shakespeare and Milton, Emerson and Lowell, if the intercourse has not provoked a life-long thirst for helpful and inspiring communion with them and other great spirits? If by our clumsiness we have killed or lessened the love of Letters in any child, we have made a curse of the literary knowledge we have given him.

And yet the love which it is the supreme purpose of Literature to generate or deepen in the child, is not love of literary culture itself, but rather of the life which Literature reflects and irradiates. "We create life through ideals," said Pestalozzi; and it is to bring the child under the sway of noble ideals of manhood and womanhood, noble types of life, noble deeds, noble feel-

ings and thoughts about life and the duties and opportunities of living,—for this that Literature must be employed. To read great books with one's heart and imagination in the reading, is, in a certain sense, to live; to gain vicarious experience. And this life, in which we participate through books,—because it is invested with an imaginative halo, and has an ideal suggestiveness, completeness, and force, which provoke admiration and longing,—is so important because it sets up imitative tendencies that carry us into action. We all tend to become what we admire; to copy the men and women to whom we have given our hearts away. It is through these, as embodying ideals that have hypnotized us and have spread a subtle, sweetly tyrannizing influence through our being, that we are creating our own life and shaping our destiny, to recur to Pestalozzi's thought.

Here, then, in so using Literature as to form character, is the teacher's most important and delicate task. To accomplish it, she must know how to deal with Literature vitally as a form of life, as a means of embodying and creating ideals that cast their imaginative spell about the child. She must herself have lived vitally, and must have related her culture to her living, to her quest for ideals, to her own deepest experiences. Only life begets life; only what comes from the heart goes to the heart; and it is only as the teacher has herself first drawn life

from Literature that she can communicate its life to others. "The most valuable critic," says Dowden, "is the critic who communicates sympathy by an exquisite record of his own delights." The words may be applied to the teacher; her own delight in what she is reading or teaching must be as a fountain of life in a dry place. Her own likes may be ignored in teaching other subjects; but here the absence of liking cannot be pardoned. For the twentieth time, it may be, she has to teach her little class, "Piping down the valleys wild"; for the twentieth time she feels and communicates the joy of that beautiful lyric. For the twentieth time she has to repeat with older pupils, "Yet once more, O ye laurels," and the old thrill is hers once more. As well might she think of remaining insensitive to the fiftieth return of spring, or the daily pageant of sunset and the star-sprent heavens, as of remaining unmoved by these miracles of the poet's art.

There is one pitfall, however, that awaits those who are eager in the pursuit of this final aim,—that of forcing the didactic note. A work of art is not a sermon or a pulpit; and we wrong it when we compel it to argue, or use it to enforce our own little moralizing text. Art recognizes that the syllogism is less powerful than the parable in its effect upon character; that a man's arguments are not so expressive as his personality and habits. It seems necessary

to insist upon this, because teachers and text-books have a noticeable leaning to what is "preachy" in Poetry and Literature; they tend to treat Literature as they would the Ten Commandments. That is the result of failure to apprehend the true nature of Literature as a form of art; to recognize that its influence is silent and subtle, reaching the reason through the emotions; affecting profoundly and unconsciously the child's moods and temper; his way of looking at, and feeling about, things. That is why full justice must be done to the beauty of Literature, even in the interests of its moral effect. We must not neglect its sensuous appeal; the color and singing quality of its words; its cadences and rhythms.

V. The development of appreciative power is the best of aids in the development of expressional power. In other words, expression is intimately related to impression. The best class in Composition is generally the best class in Literature. Those can give most and best who have received most and best. Children learn to write as they learn to swim, — by watching and imitating others; by trying under the lead of a model. They develop a feeling and instinct and knack for writing, without which they will never be effective as writers. Unless one can develop this craftsmanlike pride and interest one labors to small results. The child or youth who writes well is he who feels that he has something to

say, wants to say it, and to say it well — to make his point. He naturally falls back, consciously or unconsciously, upon examples known to him. A workmanlike regard for his tools, a sense of responsibility toward the medium in which he is working, — this is what we want in the end to develop; and this is developed, not by rule and injunction, but by catching the spirit and developing the conscience of the craft through the persistent effort to practice it.

It is a great and very common mistake to dissociate the two sides, the appreciative and the creative; to neglect to use the one as a main agency in the development of the other. A professor who has written a textbook on composition is reported as having said at an educational conference: "It seems really axiomatic that in school work the study of English Literature is less necessary than the study of what makes correct, everyday English." This position is weak, on every score, we believe; whether from the point of view of culture, or of character development, or of expressive power; but it is unfortunate chiefly because it sets up a sort of rivalry between two complementary studies and interests. Our composition work ought to be much more imitative than it is: much more resonant with echoes of the work of the masters; but it will not be until we make much more extensive use of models than we have done. Mr. Webster, in his recent book on Composition (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), so full of good

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counsel and suggestion, has gone so far as to adapt his High School Course in Literature to serve the ends of his Course in Composition. This is dangerous, we think; because literary study has its own independent ends to serve. There is less danger in reversing the order. The experience of most of us, I venture to say, tallies with that of the college examiner, who found that of boys from two schools, those who came from the school where much zestful reading was done, excelled those who came from the one where, with less attention to Literature, a "thorough" drill in Composition and Rhetoric was given. The sense of form, which is the vital matter, had been better developed in the successful boys by the influence of models, than in others by the rigor of rule.

Needless to say that what applies to the taught, applies to the teacher; she also, as a craftsman, must draw inspiration and power from the great masters; she must live in the atmosphere of the great literary accomplishments of the race; must consult and study perpetually masterpieces of the class which she is trying to get her pupils to produce, and must keep alive by practice her own creative powers. Let her work with her children as the master-workman of old worked with his apprentices,—as an exemplar as well as a preceptor.

VI. One common fault in our present practice is due to the failure to see that thought and language are twin

products, and that we must deal with both in order to deal effectively with either. We speak, *e.g.*, of working for a vocabulary, without recognizing that the accumulation of a vocabulary implies growth of thought, the development of cognition. "The growth of mind," as Professor Laurie says, "and the growth of language in the mind go together. There has to be organized in the boy the language of his inner life, so that the language may grow with the life, and the life with the language." This development of the inner life can be no more effectively aided than by the endeavor to express it in language. Such a personal view of the case we fail to take. The new college entrance requirements illustrate this failure. They, and the examination papers based upon them, are in nothing so defective (excepting only the omission of oral tests) as in their composition tests, which are confined to subjects drawn from the books prescribed for reading and study. Such tests do not throw a student back upon himself; and they give the false impression that Composition has to do with reproducing (which often is nothing else than *re-organizing*) the material drawn from books and from class instruction. The kind of Composition which life, and even college work, will require from the student, will be of no such stilted, academic character. The man will have to express *himself*, his own interests, experience, knowledge. This disregard of the personal equation explains why composition work in our Gram-

mar and our High Schools is often so very poor, so lifeless, so artificial, so impersonal, so bookish. Here is the bane of the Reproduction, which figures so largely in our work: the student feels that he is merely asked to do over again what is done already in his books. This is well enough, if the aim is to test knowledge and its orderly storage in the mind: a student will see the point of that; but he instinctively feels that, for a test of his ability to compose, he must have the fresh, challenging task of delving in the field of his own mental possessions, selecting the pertinent ones, sorting and arranging them for the first time, and giving them an attractive form and that interesting personal quality which they will have only if he is really true to himself. Here it is not so much *what* he knows—the less he is troubled about that the better; it is *how* he knows it, and can tell it, to impress and interest others. His principal problem is one of organization.

VII. Self-expression is natural to the child; it is a form of self-activity in which he delights, provided we touch his real interests, or wisely tax his ingenuity. But as a rule his composition work is a bore and a “grind,” as he calls it. That is our fault; partly because we are thinking in routine, text-book terms of the task, and of getting the child to do justice to it, instead of thinking of the child, and of getting him to do justice to himself; partly also because we do not set the child free from

anxiety as to *what* he shall say, and allow him to put all his strength upon the way of saying what he has at easy command. Not that he has not to be tried by any discipline. In this, as in all other work, he has to learn how to take pains, to conceive and carry out a plan, to stick to his work until it is completed, and to toil on after the first impulse has failed him.

VIII. A danger to which we are liable, under the stress of our new ideals and enthusiasms, is over-ambition, or perhaps reckless ambition. Quantity menaces quality, and precocity (which is usually to be deplored) threatens us. We have made a plea (see Chapter III) for education according to Plato's conception of it, as appropriate and sufficient nurture or feeding; and we feel strongly that our English work, especially, may be much more nutritious (which does not mean more advanced) than it has been. But we do not nourish if we overfeed or misfeed or overtax, and our ambitious new programmes show a tendency toward all these things. If we attempt too much at once, we do nothing thoroughly; and we get into confusion, slovenliness, and forgetfulness. Our work may be simple and yet rich, instead of being like much work in the past, simple and starving; as white flour is simpler than brown, but less feeding. To illustrate, — Wordsworth's "We are Seven," Blake's "Little lamb, who made thee?" are no less simple than Isaac Watts's preceptive rhymes; but they make twice as much brain-stuff

They are suggestive; and so they take root and grow, if properly seeded down. To do little work, so it be of the telling kind, rather than much of an indifferent quality; and to do this little cleanly, finely, so that it sticks, — this is what we want. And this is even more true of work in Composition than in Literature: we must be careful not to ask for too much, recognizing that a child's receptive and appreciative powers outrun his expressive powers, and that time must be allowed for the digestion of what he receives.

IX. We must avoid waste in order to get good results; and this we shall do when (1) our programmes are more organic and unified than they are now, and (2) when the work of each grade is done by the teacher in the light of the course as a whole, and according to the final ends aimed at.

(1) Our English Course ought to show a definite organizing policy animating and articulating the work of each and every grade; a network of connecting tissue uniting it all. The work of each grade must be clearly defined and well developed; advancing steadily from the point where the work was left in the preceding grade, and covering just as much new ground as can be covered on the road toward the goals fixed by the course. In general (we are too well aware of exceptional circumstances) each teacher ought to be able to rely, in English work, as confidently as she may in such obviously step-by-step studies as Arithmetic, upon cer-

tain definite accomplishments and conquests in the class that comes up to her at the beginning of the year—no less and no more. Such and such specific bad habits (“ain’t” and “saw’r”) have been attacked in preceding grades; certain powers (the comprehension of what a paragraph means, and of how to construct two related paragraphs in a simple scheme of contrast) have been exercised; such and such poems and stories have been read, re-read, memorized, used for comparative purposes, etc. These powers will now be re-exercised in the advance toward new difficulties; and the class will at the end of the year carry a very definitely enlarged inheritance to the next grade—no less and no more. The teacher, on such a plan, must learn to leave certain mistakes and failings alone, although they may chafe her. They will be struggled with in a later grade. Let her, in her reading, press her development work and her explanations only up to the fixed limits; in her written work, attempt only such and such forms of composition. Limitation will be the condition of effectiveness.

(2) The success of such a plan must depend upon the teacher’s ability to see the work of her grade in its organic relation, not only to the work of the grade below and the grade above her own, but as a stage in the progress toward certain final results, and as a contribution to those results. Not only does it give interest and meaning to her work thus to foresee the bud in the seed, the full flower in the bud, the fruit

in the flower; but it is the necessary condition of unity of aim and continuity of development in the school work. No elementary teacher can do her work effectively who is not working upon the same general principles, grammatical, rhetorical, and critical, as those upon which the High School or College teacher is working. She must, therefore, have a good theoretical and practical command of those principles. She is simply applying them at a different stage of the child's development, and needs a peculiarly delicate skill, born of a divination of the child's nature, in order so to apply them. She must bring something of the same high critical standards to her choice and treatment of literature; something of the same feeling for style as the High School or College teacher should bring. She, too, is working, in ways appropriate to the age of her pupils (now empirically, now rationally, now synthetically, now analytically), for Clearness, Force, and Rhythm, for Purity and Propriety, for Coherence and Sequence; and she must know accurately and fully both what these qualities are, and the chief secrets of their attainment.

So recurs once more the refrain to our various criticisms,—the need of a higher literary culture among our teachers, higher standards, better and richer training. Here we have the first condition of any noteworthy improvement in our school work. It is unnecessary to pass any detailed criticism upon the

English teaching in our Normal Schools and Training Colleges; it is, on the average, admittedly inadequate. We do not lose sight of the fact that English is only one of many subjects which the Elementary School teacher is called upon to teach; but we affirm that it is the most important subject, the core and the foundation of the curriculum, disciplining the mind to truer, wider vision, purifying and deepening the emotions that are the main factors in character, bracing and strengthening the will to the patient control and the energetic and noble use of the powers of heart and mind.

Our plea for English culture, broad and deep, as the one thing needful in our teachers of English, is made in no partisan or exclusive spirit. We are not of those who are in any way jealous of the claims and assertiveness of Science. Our ideal in education is not a distinctively literary education; and to us anything like a literary pose, literary snobbery or pretentiousness, is utterly intolerable. It is a wholesome experience for a literary man to have to serve his time in a technical school, where the students are all for Science and the Crafts, and regard Literature and Language as species of refined, purgatorial requirements. He works without a halo: no shy, illusive light lends enchantment to his devotions to the Muses. He must win respect for his subject by its blood-red, purple-veined humanism; by its sheer power over the

heart; by its resistlessly attractive dealings with recognizably real, palpitating things. No fine flutings, no dainty word-devices, will avail. And this, we say, is wholesome for both teacher and taught. Would there were more of such frankly human testing of literary products, to exterminate the brood of triflers who are the victims of that graphomania which we have had diagnosed for us of late. No; let us have, as the best basis for literary appreciation and effectiveness, a sturdy love and zest of life, a feeling for the glory and greatness and sacredness of it, the common human and natural quality of it;—for this great round earth, so strangely afloat among the constellations; these restless millions upon it—heroes and nobles, conquerors and conquered; this tragic-comic drama of human life, and the great inheritances which Science and Art have left us, and which need no literary advertising. Above all let us prize a first-hand knowledge of Duty and Love, Courage and Honor, Justice and Freedom: happy are we if we can get or evoke these as foundations for that glorification of them which Literature achieves.

We need not fear to set the highest humanitarian standards for ourselves. Our danger is less that of unduly magnifying our teaching office than of dropping to the level of a commonplace professionalism. We should come nearer being priests than purveyors; and indeed, it is in the growth of the feeling that is begin-

ning to pervade our ranks of our being a lay priesthood, called to the cure of young souls, that we have cause for highest hope. This is true of all teachers, whatever their subject; for there is none but has its ethical, its religious serviceableness. But to the teacher of Literature this view applies in the most obvious way. His best and ultimate aim must be to help his pupils to partake in an exceptional degree, through the greatest works in Poetry, of the highest fruits of the ethical and religious consciousness of man;—to effect through them that cleansing, that purgation, which was regarded by the master-mind of antiquity as the high religious office of its greatest literary products, its Drama. To instil ideals, through contact with them in Literature; to promote self-command and worthy self-expression through the cultivation of power over the tongue,—such is the calling to which the teacher of English is properly self dedicated.

SKETCH OF HIGH SCHOOL COURSE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE, SHOWING HOW THE WORK MAY BE MASSED TO SECURE BOTH COHERENCE AND PROGRESSION WHILE VARIED TO INCLUDE THE LEADING LITERARY SPECIES

Kind of Work	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
EPIC and BALLAD.	<i>Emphasis at the start on narrative species.</i> Scott's narrative poems. "Sohrab and Rustum." Homer (Ulysses in Phæacia).	<i>Beginning with emphasis on descriptive species.</i> "Ancient Mariner," "Forsaken Merman."	<i>Beginning with emphasis on expository species.</i> "Idylls of the King."	<i>Emphasis on argumentative species.</i>
LYRIC, IDYLIC and REFLECTIVE.	{ Ballads, ancient and modern; short and long.	Gray's "Elegy," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," Byron's "Childe Harold," etc. Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes," etc. "Merchant of Venice."	Dryden: Odes, Epistles, "Palamon and Arcite." Prose. Pope: Epistles; "Essay on Criticism"; "Rape of the Lock." "As You Like It," "Midsummer Night's Dream."	"Macbeth." [Comparative Study of Drama.]
SHAKESPEARE.	"Julius Cæsar," [Plutarch, Froude.]			

MILTON.	"L'Allegro," and "Il Penseroso."	"Sonnets and some prose."	"Comus" and "Lycidas."
SHORT STORY and NOVEL.	Hawthorne, Poe, Irving, Kipling, Bunner, Stockton, etc. "Ivanhoe" etc.	"Vicar of Wakefield," "Cranford," "Pride and Prejudice," "Esmond," Dickens, etc.	["Romola," "House of the Seven Gables," etc.]
MISCELLANEOUS	Life and Letters of Hawthorne and Scott.	Bacon, Milton, Bible.	Macaulay's Milton
PROSE: ESSAY, SKETCH, BIOGRAPHY, etc.	"Travels with a Donkey," etc. Burroughs (for Nature interest), etc.	Swift, Defoe, Bunyan, De Coverley Papers, Macaulay's Addison.	(with Mark Pattison's or Raleigh's biographies). Carlyle's "Essay on Burns."
SPEECHES and ORATIONS.	Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech.	Webster.	Burke (Morley's Life).

The arrangement does not indicate the order in which the works should be taken in any year. See text, Chap. XIV. Only a few books, among the many from which choice might be made, have been named; and these, for the sake of suggestion. For additions see the List of Books for Home Reading Recommended by the Conference on College Entrance Requirements in English. The most flagrant omissions are American poets and writers (Emerson, Lowell, Holmes), and such great names as Shelley, Wordsworth, and Browning; De Quincey, Landor, and Ruskin. These may be substituted for those authors who have already been read in the Grammar Grades, or may be introduced for comparative or collateral reading.

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(Abbreviation: H. S. for High School.)

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